

WHERE THE **WEST** BEGINS

NEBRASKAland

COVER STORY NEBRASKAland

January 1966 50 cents



1963 - GOTHAM BOWL

1964 - ORANGE BOWL

1965 - COTTON BOWL

1966 - ORANGE BOWL



NEBRASKA MEANS A lot of things to a lot of people, but it means football to all. Some people may never have tasted the succulent beef produced on the state's thousands of acres of lush grazing land and perhaps a few do not know of the state's giant industrial complexes which provide for a nation. But no matter where it is heard, the name Nebraska is synonymous with hard-nosed football. For the steam-rolling Cornhuskers match brains and brawn with the cream of the gridiron crop and come up with an enviable record of victories.

Football is a year-round topic here, where the WEST begins. Though the snow blankets the 100-yard stretch of turf, or the Midwestern sun beats down relentlessly, it is always football weather. Street corners, barber shops, and a thousand and one other places are gridirons as Monday quarterbacks

rerun plays, recall games, and analyze prospects. And there is a good reason for the enthusiasm generated in Nebraska.

There were lean years in the Cornhusker camp, but the Husker fan's fighting spirit didn't ebb. Then in 1962 a stout, friendly Irishman ambled onto Nebraska's football scene. Head coach Bob Devaney brought with him an unequaled brand of football savvy, an understanding of people, and above all, a determination to win.

Devaney's combination parlayed an unrated team into one of America's top football contenders. In 1962 Bob's gridiron know-how stacked up an 8-2 record. The Huskers then lit a fire under the sporting world as they rolled over Miami in the Gotham Bowl in a post-season game. If there were any skeptics in the crowds the next year, Devaney and his



NEBRASKAland

JANUARY

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THE COVER: Nebraska's Fred Duda launches pass as Huskers topple Kansas on way to Orange Bowl for grid battle against Alabama

Photo by Richard Vogis

Cornhuskers soon dispelled their doubts. In 1963 the Big Red downed opponents right and left to the tune of a 9-1 season in regular play. Oranges became a favorite food for Nebraskans in 1963 as the Big Eight champs romped over Auburn in Miami's New Year's Day classic. The 1964 season was a bright one as the gridders rolled up a 9-1 slate.

Oranges changed to cotton as the Huskers journeyed to Dallas for the Cotton Bowl clash with Arkansas. The Razorbacks squeezed out a 10-7 victory. It was the Orange Bowl in 1965 as the Cornhuskers rolled to an unbeaten season and their third consecutive Big Eight championship.

The Big Red is king of the mountain and its future looks mighty bright. But win or lose, you can rest assured that Nebraskans will stand behind their mighty Cornhuskers.

THE END

SELLING NEBRASKAland IS OUR BUSINESS

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JANUARY

Roundup

*From swishing nets to zooming birds,
1966's premier month runs gamut of
fun. Frosty air, snow cover add sparkle*

THOSE MASTERS of hilarious basketball, the Harlem Globe Trotters share the winter sports scene with hard-water fishermen and frosty-fingered hunters as January makes its debut in NEBRASKAland. From the first day to the last, there is a full schedule of events across the length and breadth of the state.

Sportsmen who don their "long johns" and a pair of warm gloves have from January 8 through 23 to try their shooting eye on hen pheasants in specified areas. This special season lasts the final 16 days of the regular pheasant season. Hen areas include the north-eastern and western regions of the state. The daily bag limit remains at four, one of which may be a hen. Possession limit is 20, five of which may be hens.

The season for one of the trickiest of all gamesters, the bobwhite, comes to

an end January 2. But hunters have until January 31 to bag squirrel. Cottontails will be on the run all the time, as there is no closed season on the bunnies in this rabbit-rich state.

Nebraska trout keep biting all winter, and hardy souls who forget the thermometer can tangle with the big ones in frigid streams. January ice-fishermen can string bragging-size catches of perch, bluegill, crappie, walleye, trout, and northern pike.

Spectator sports fans have a calendar full of basketball and wrestling. The University of Nebraska cagers meet Missouri, Kansas State University, University of Kansas, and the University of Oklahoma during the month. High school teams across the state will be boning up their shooting and passing skills before district contests start in February.

And all-star wrestling will attract followers five times during the month in Lincoln and Omaha. But the big show will be at Lincoln's Pershing Municipal Auditorium on January 4, when the world-famous cagers and comedians, the Harlem Globe Trotters, appear.

Stars from the entertainment world sparkle on the January horizon, too, as the Grand Ole Opry appears in Omaha, January 21, and in Lincoln, January 27, at Pershing Auditorium.

In NEBRASKAland there's always much to do, whether it's ice-skating in the comfortable rink at Pershing or on a glassy-smooth country pond, or discovering the beauty of untouched, snow-covered fields, ice-bound rivers, and the lacy patterns of frosted trees.

Musical events and art exhibits draw winter travelers to Lincoln and Omaha. Tong Il Han, a Korean-born pianist, will appear in concert with the Lincoln Symphony Orchestra on January 11. For art lovers, Joslyn Museum in Omaha is the place to go. January exhibits there include Time Magazine Portraits, the William Blake show, and the "ART USA" show. Award-winning Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery

in Lincoln features exhibits by architect Louis Kahn and print-maker Thomas Cornell. Kahn, whose exhibit will be co-sponsored by the University of Nebraska Department of Architecture, designed Salk Institute and the School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. A progressive display of Nebraska artists will conclude this month at the State Historical Society in Lincoln with works of the 1930's.

There's something for everybody in January NEBRASKAland, as a glance through the calendar of conventions and conferences shows. State 4-H leaders can attend sub-district leadership conferences in Lincoln, Ogallala, Alliance, McCook, Lexington, and Hastings. A state 4-H Council Members Conference is scheduled for January 17-19 at the Nebraska Center for Continuing Education in Lincoln.

Fathers and sons who farm together have an opportunity to attend a Father and Son Farm Operators Conference at the Nebraska Center for Continuing Education in Lincoln. It is sponsored by the University of Nebraska. The conference, January 27-28, is aimed at father-son teams of beginning and established farmers, and includes lectures on problems confronting family operations, pitfalls to be avoided, organization for optimum profit, financing a farm operation, and methods of transferring property.

Adding interest to the January educational scene are conferences on irrigation, turf grass, farm welding, and watersheds, all open to the public at the Nebraska Center.

New Year's bells will ring in a jam-packed month of sports, cultural, and educational activities for NEBRASKAlanders across the state. **THE END**

NEBRASKAland HOSTESS OF THE MONTH Candy May

NEBRASKAland is a winter wonderland in January, offering excitement indoors and out. Pheasant season winds up across the state, and spectators cheer as their favorite basketball team pounds the boards. NEBRASKAland hostess, Candy May, says it's great ice-skating weather, and she invites you to come along. Candy, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. F. Arnold May of Omaha, was voted 1965 Homecoming Queen at the University of Nebraska. She is a junior, majoring in speech and English. Candy attended the University of Omaha her freshman year. Chosen Outstanding Actress in Experimental Theatre last year, Candy received a "Dallas" award.

WHAT TO DO

January 1—HAPPY NEW YEAR

1-2—Omaha
Time Magazine Portraits, Joslyn Art Museum

1—Omaha
All-Star Wrestling, City Auditorium

1-16—Omaha
William Blake Show, Joslyn

2—Entire State
Quail Season Ends

4—Lincoln
Harlem Globe Trotters, Pershing Municipal Auditorium

5—Lincoln
Wrestling, Pershing Auditorium

6-8—Lincoln
National Pigeon Show, State Fairgrounds

January 8-February 6—Lincoln
Thomas Cornell Exhibit, Sheldon Gallery

8—Lincoln
Basketball, Nebraska vs. Missouri

8-10—Lincoln
Public ice-skating, Pershing Auditorium

8—Omaha
All-Star Wrestling, City Auditorium

8—Designated Areas
Opening of hen pheasant season

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- 10—Lincoln
Sub-district 4-H Leaders Conference, Nebraska Center
- 11—Lincoln
Lincoln Symphony Orchestra with Tong Il Han
- 11-12—Lincoln
Irrigation Short Course, Nebraska Center
- January 11-February 13—Lincoln
Louis Kahn Exhibit, Sheldon Art Gallery
- 12-14—Lincoln
Turf Grass Conference, Nebraska Center
- 14—Omaha
All-Star Wrestling, City Auditorium
- 15—Lincoln
Basketball, Nebraska vs. Kansas State U.
- 16-18—Lincoln
Public ice-skating, Pershing Municipal Auditorium
- 17-19—Lincoln
State 4-H Leadership Council Conference, Nebraska Center
- 18—Lincoln
Wrestling, Pershing Municipal Auditorium
- Basketball, Nebraska vs. Kansas U.
- 20-21—Lincoln
Nebraska Well-Drillers' Association Seminar
- 21—Omaha
All-Star Wrestling, City Auditorium
Grand Ole Opry
- 22—Lincoln
Basketball, Nebraska vs. Oklahoma U.
- 23—Entire State
End of pheasant season
- 24-27—Lincoln
Farm Welding Short Course, Nebraska Center
- 24—Alliance
Sub-District 4-H Leaders Conference
- 25—Ogallala
Sub-District 4-H Leaders Conference
- 25-26—Lincoln
Watershed Workshop, Nebraska Center
- 26—McCook
Sub-District 4-H Leaders Conference
- 27—Lexington
Sub-District 4-H Leaders Conference
- 27-28—Lincoln
Father and Son Farm Operations Conference, Nebraska Center
- 27-Lincoln
Grand Ole Opry, Pershing Municipal Auditorium
- 27—Humboldt
Area Swine Day
- 27-28—Omaha
Chamber of Commerce Managers Conference
- 27-28—Lincoln
Ag Experiment Station Conference, Nebraska Center
- 28—Hastings
Sub-District 4-H Leaders Conference
- January 28-February 20—Omaha
"ART USA" Show, Joslyn
- 29—Ord
Chamber of Commerce Pancake Feed
- 29—Lincoln
University of Nebraska Mid-Year Commencement
- 29—Omaha
All-Star Wrestling
- 30-31—Omaha
Nebraska Hairdressers and Cosmetologists Convention

WHEN YOU TRAVEL IN NEBRASKA LOOK FOR THE SIGN OF **NEBRASKAlander**

If your business brings you into contact with the traveling public, you can join the NEBRASKAlander program. Write to the Information and Tourism Division, Nebraska Game Commission, State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska for requirements and application.



SPEAK UP

DOG'S LIFE—"I read with particular interest your article, 'Jet Age Dogs' in the October issue of NEBRASKAlander. One item, especially, noted briefly in the article and illustrated in the lower photo on page 13, could be very useful.

"It is difficult, even in suburban areas, to give a larger dog sufficient regular exercise to keep him in top shape. The obstacle course shown and noted would be of great help."—**Nela E. Wilson, Idaho Falls, Idaho.**

FROGS AND TOADS—"Could you tell me what took place approximately four miles east of Hastings on the afternoon of July 19, 1965? We were on vacation going to Lincoln when we came to a small bridge where the road on the south was covered with light brown objects. At first I thought they were leaves or trash from a field. As I crossed a small bridge the objects became more numerous, and I could see they were jumping. I decided they must be toads. It was some time before we saw the last of them.

"Though raised in Nebraska, I had never seen such a turnout. Now, were they frogs or toads?"—**G. W. Monahan, Inglewood, California.**

The large numbers of animals you described could have been either frogs or toads. Both exhibit this particular behavior or mass migration. A few years ago, the editor had a similar experience on a Sand Hills road. Thousands of the little amphibians covered

the highway for more than a mile. The road surface was slippery from their crushed bodies.

This migration is often associated with the drying up of the ponds or water in which they were hatched and their search for new or more permanent water.—**Editor.**

SCENIC TOUR—"About a month ago, we took a short tour of Nebraska's beauty spots as described in the NEBRASKAlander we borrowed. We went west and south, then east to North Platte, and north again to Halsey.

"We enjoyed the trip very much but we hope that access roads can be improved soon, the routes marked more clearly, and the places advertised more.

"We got lost on the Dead Horse Canyon drive because there were no signs. We enjoyed Toadstool Park but a scenic drive through that area would be wonderful. We have driven many miles to the beauty spots in other states but passed ours up because of poor advertising and poor roads.

"Our state can use the tourist money, too."—**Floyd R. Gibbs, Orchard.**

TOADSTOOL—"I returned from vacation last summer with a question.

"I arranged my return to Omaha through western Nebraska, so I might take in some of the scenic country, as stated in publications and through newspaper articles. I entered the state via Highway 71, which became State Highway 2 at the northern boundary. I had great anticipation of seeing Toadstool Park, which is shown on the map. However, I am still trying to find it. Just where is it?

"There were no signs, no indication of where it may be, none of the country appears to look anything like Toadstool Park is shown to be."—**Dorothy A. Pitzl, Omaha.**

Toadstool Park is located just west of old Highway 2, north of Crawford. It is marked

by a road sign about 3½ miles south of Orella. The park with its weird formations is on government land, and the U. S. Forest Service is in the process of erecting facilities for tourists.—**Editor.**

ROVING MINK—"Eighty-six-year-old William Luben is well known in the Clearwater area by both fur buyer and seller.

"A recent visitor to Bill's fur house was a female mink. Mr. Luben has dealt in furs for over 50 years, and many thousands of mink pelts have passed through his hands. But as Bill put it, this is the first time one ever came in on her own power, rushing the season, besides.

"The mink was spotted by Bill's daughter a few days earlier, and seemed to want to take up residence. She was seen by the paper boy and the neighbors. But mink-like, she would disappear in a flash.

"One morning, Bill was looking toward the fur house. There was Mrs. Mink sitting calmly on the step as if waiting to be valued. But to the dismay of the Lubens and the neighbors, that was her last chance. She darted away and has not re-appeared since.

"The Lubens have lived in Clearwater a great many years, coming in from the farm. But even in the country they never had a mink walk in."—**Neva Curtright, Clearwater.**

IMPRESSED—"I was quite impressed with your July issue, particularly the 'Sights of Summer' article with the colored pictures of your lovely state. Now, with the receipt of the September issue, I'm convinced that Connecticut has met its match in Nebraska. I thoroughly enjoyed reading 'The Festival of Fall', the pictures were beautiful.

"I plan to take President Johnson's advice: 'See America First'. I'll start with the very scenic state of Nebraska. Thank you for a most delightful magazine."—**Helen A. Leonard, Hartford, Connecticut.**

Is it or is it not? Lady and I stare,
uncertain if the bird is real or mirage



WILL-O'-THE-WISP

By Ray Gans

*This case of the vanishing bobs would
stump even Sherlock himself*

I AM A MAN of strong convictions. I don't believe in the supernatural. I don't buy black magic, and feats of legerdemain leave me cold. But those cussed Pawnee City quail were shaking my preconceived notions. They had started their tricks about two hours earlier when I spooked a big batch of bobwhites on the bottoms along the Big Nemaha River in southeastern Nebraska.

The birds had disappeared so completely that I was almost ready to believe the earth had swallowed them up. What was even more mystifying, the quail had

vanished in a 30-acre field, bounded on three sides by water and fronted by a patch of close-cropped alfalfa. In a way, I didn't have any business trifling with that covey since I had combed the same ground that morning and drawn a blank. When the bobs pulled their "now you see us, now you don't" bit, I wasn't so sure that my imagination wasn't conjuring up phantom birds. I couldn't doubt reality even if I wanted to because I had already shot one.

Lady, my 4½-year-old Brittany, and I had three birds in the bag before I got tangled up with those



In my book, this sprite rates tops as upland game bird. He keeps Lady and me hopping on hunt

Leland stays to pick corn but points out farm boundaries



darned will-o'-the-wisps. I saw them, and Lady smelled them, but find them again we couldn't. Come to think of it, that early November quail hunt was a strange one from beginning to end.

Lady and I had made a morning swing through the bottoms and then headed for the slopes above the river. The day was getting hot and the wind was square from the south so I figured the bobwhites would be loafing out the heat in the wild plum thickets. We probed every clump in a half mile stretch and never rattled up a bird, so I started down a little draw toward the car.

There was a little tangle of weeds and sumac at the bottom of the draw. I didn't think it was worth a second look but Lady was acting birdy so I gave it a once over. Lady slammed into a point about two yards from the thicket as I moved up. About 30 tempting but illegal mourning doves swirled out to give me momentary heart failure but I remembered the law and let them go.

"Old girl, you're getting so frustrated that any thing with feathers gets your dander up. But doves aren't our meat, so come out of there and let's go," I consoled the disappointed dog.

Lady looked at me, wagged her stump tail, and went back on point. This disobedience called for sterner measures. "Come out of there!" I shouted. The dog backed out, expressing canine disgust with every lagging step. I was 50 yards down the draw before I missed the Brit. Turning, I was just in time to see her belting into the clump amid a scattering of bobwhites.

Feeling pretty foolish, I marked the birds down and made a slow approach to the grassy slope where they had landed. The Brittany was hunting hard, trying to wind scent the hidden birds. She pointed and for a second or two I admired her staunchness. The little fawn and white dog was rigid, her whole body frozen in concentration as her sensitive nose sampled the hot



Bewildered, Lady and I take five after chasing ghost birds

WILL-O'-THE-WISP

Continued



Our luck rides a seesaw. One moment it's good and then it's bad

scent. But I had come to hunt quail, not admire dogs, so I ordered the flush. The bob came up and whirred toward the trees.

It took a long second to pick him up over the muzzle but when the 12-gauge spewed out its charge of No. 8's, the bird fluttered down. He was a "squeaker", a youngster. "Young as he was, he tried to put a tree between me and him," I reflected as I tucked him in my coat.

Encouraged, Lady went back to work. She zeroed in on another bird and I nailed him within 25 yards. He was a squeaker, too, and I realized that this was a young covey. I decided to take one more and let the rest alone. Moving up slope, I wasn't expecting the bob that zoomed up on my left but my hurried snap shot was on the money and he came down. With half of my limit in my coat, I took a break and started thinking about the hunt. The territory was unfamiliar but one of my colleagues in the Lincoln Fire Department had recommended it as a quail hot spot.

"You'll limit out down there in a couple of hours. Birds all over the place. I've got a cousin, Leland Frank, who farms 240 acres on the Big Nemaha. He'll let you hunt," my buddy assured me. He drew a rough map so I didn't have any trouble finding the farm but Leland had some disquieting news.

"I had a couple of friends down here on opening week end and we hunted all over the place without flushing a feather. Still, I know there are some coveys around because I saw them before the season opened. If I were you I would hunt the bottoms. You ought to find some birds in the timber," he told me.

Leland couldn't go. He was picking corn and racing the good weather to get it done. He pointed out the

boundaries of his farm and went back to work leaving Lady and me to find the quail on our own.

I parked the car and took a good look at the place. The Nemaha oxbowed its way around the bottoms, its serpentine course marked by cottonwoods and elms. There was a heavy understory beneath the big trees and a lot of sunflowers and goldenrod on the edges of the cultivated land. A series of weed-filled run-off ditches angled down the slopes toward the lazy river.

Lady and I hit the bottoms hard. We prowled the timber, searched the draws, and pounded the fringes but it was no go. As we hunted I noticed the high water mark on the trees and the windrows of driftwood and debris that fringed the cultivated land. The mud and silt of a summer flood had dried to a powdery dust that coated my clothes and set Lady to sneezing. Surmising that the high water might have driven the birds to higher ground I angled toward the slopes. My idea was borne out when we jumped the first covey in the draw.

While Lady cleaned cockleburs from her coat and paws, I recalled other hunts in Nebraska. I've been at it for better than 30 years so I have lots of memories. A couple of years ago, I was hunting in the south-central section of the state. I busted a big covey and leveled off on one bird. Three tumbled at the shot. After





Lady's unfailing nose leads her to quail. Pointing, she waits my order to flush



This quail becomes a Jonah and turns my luck sour

settling down, I worked on singles and got three with three shots. I was back to the car in less than an hour, six bobs heavier and four shells lighter.

Probably my biggest thrill in quail hunting came a few years ago on the last day of the season. The area was supposed to have been hunted very hard but I didn't have much time so I decided to give it a try. In almost no time I spooked three big coveys and got my limit of birds without a miss. It was a fitting climax to a fine hunting year.

Another time, I hunted all day, shot up more than half a box of shells and came back with two birds. Ironically, I missed all the easy chances and scored on the two toughest tries of the day. Some of my quail hunts have been great, others poor, but limit kill or empty game pocket, I rate bobwhite as the champ of upland game and never regret the time spent hunting him.

Rested up, the Brittany and I headed back to the car and met Leland on his way to dinner. He had some news. When he pulled out of the field, he had spooked a big covey. He watched it land and marked the spot. After getting directions, Lady and I hurried over to the brushy draw that divided a cornfield.

Lady "made" birds as soon as we hit it but she couldn't pin one. Suddenly, a (continued on page 51)

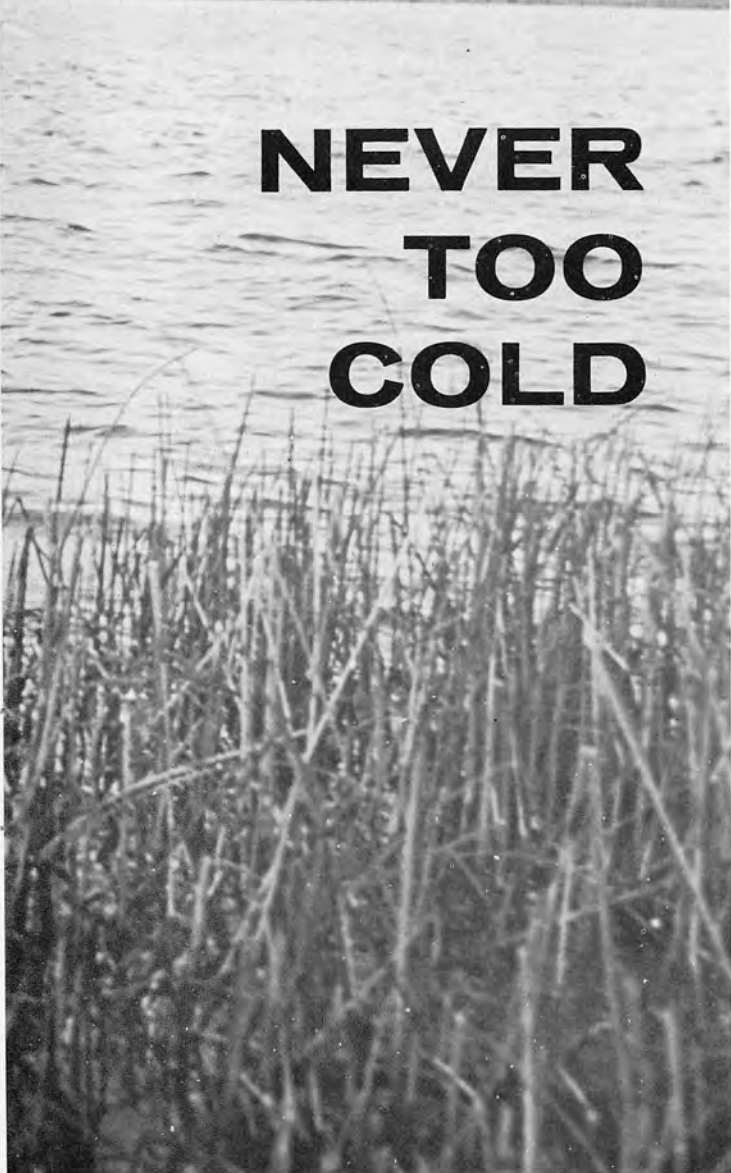


With just minutes to spare, I get two more to limit out





NEVER TOO COLD



DAVE AVEY of Crawford was having a fair share of trouble trying to sell his slow-moving spinner to a reluctant lunker. He could see the big bass cruising through the open pockets of water in the Sand Hills pond but seeing fish and catching them are two different propositions. Besides the cold shoulder treatment from the bass, the angler was having other difficulties. Moss was interfering with every retrieve while the sticky mud clutched at his waders, making every step an exhausting effort. A little bit of this fishing goes a long, long ways and Dave was about to give it up. Besides, there were other ponds scattered around the Oglala National Grasslands between Crawford, Nebraska, and the state line.

He made a final cast and towed in a fingerling bass literally encased in a gob of soggy, clinging moss. Sweating in the unseasonably mild October air, the angler heaved back to shore. The bite-sized bass was the crusher so Dave decided to give it up and try another pond.

Climbing into the car, Avey looked at the puffy clouds overhead, with their promise of fair weather. Most of the Chadron State College sophomore's 20 years are divided between the Nebraska Sand Hills and Pine Ridge country. He knows that only a sprinkle of rain can make the trails across the grassland impossible. The

*Skeptics and season can't cool
Dave Avey's enthusiasm when he
tackles bass in a government pond*

Dave's spirits warm when cold-water keeper gobbles a crawler



Stringer is satisfying load as Dave ponders what's in a name. The sport is enough



Bit of rearranging put bait back on job. Most were only two-fish frogs

Area blankets nearly 100 thousand acres tapped by Highway 2

NEVER TOO COLD

continued

wet clay gumbo builds up on spinning tires until a vehicle is immobilized by the clinging, heavy stuff.

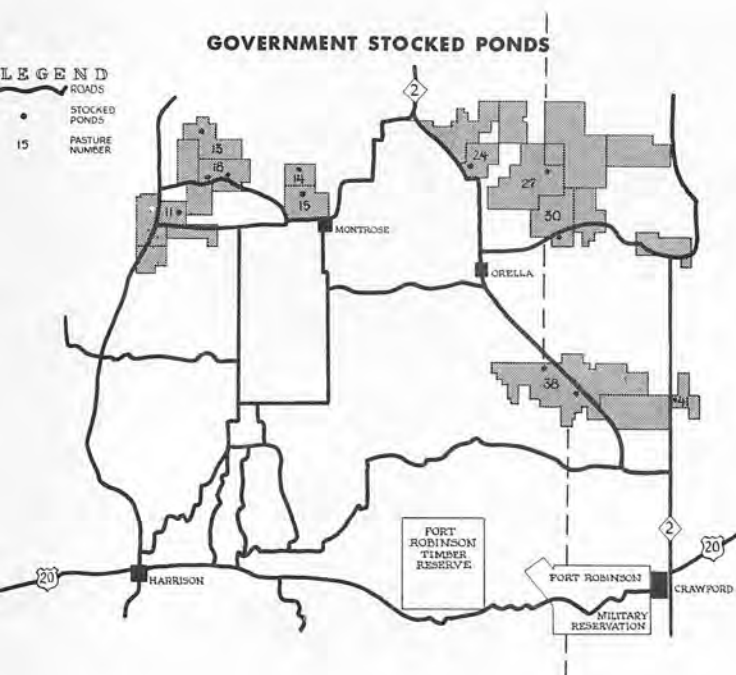
The nature of the soil is a blessing in disguise, at least as far as fishing goes. About 150 runoff dams, gouged like cups into the clay, are virtually impervious to seepage. Once the water is collected, it leaves only through evaporation.

Assuming that it was safe to go deeper into the area, Dave drove toward the crest of a knobby. He could see Sugarloaf Butte thrusting its black bulk above the rolling prairie and used it to orient himself as he pushed into the roadless expanse of this unusual area. The grassland rolled toward the pine-blackened hills on the horizon with here and there some scattered clumps of buildings dotting the prairie. A closed gate marked the entry into another pasture. He stopped to open the

gate and drove through, stopping again on the other side. Being a native, he didn't need to read the yellow Forest Service sign admonishing visitors to "please close the gate". A line of surveyor's stakes pointed to the rutted trail leading to the next pond.

The stakes are preliminaries to a Forest Service multiple use plan to boost public enjoyment of the grassland. Soon, all-weather roads from State Highway 2 will bring in more fishermen, hunters, and rock hounds to this federally owned area. A flock of pintails whirled overhead as the car rolled to a stop beside a crescent-shaped impoundment. Dave glanced at the shotgun in the back seat, shrugged, and hefted the spinning outfit. Today he was bent on fishing.

The college student slipped into the icy water for a quick try. There was always the chance a few bass might



be hanging around, though the pond contains mostly bullheads. During the tourist season the pond pulls double duty as a baby sitter for the many rock hound families. Junior fills the time fishing for the horned scrappers while Mom and Pop pick over the numerous rock outcroppings for prizes.

Even the bullheads were off their feed that day, and Dave's night crawler was left soggy and untasted. Bass lures were of no avail, either. It was time to call it quits entirely or to move on the third and final pond in the young angler's itinerary. He unhooked the 'crawler and tossed it into the water before he eased his waderclad body into the car seat for the next go round.

Board Gate Pond was the angler's next target. It was so named by local residents for a wooden gate which is no longer standing. The pond is among the

largest of its kind in the area. A small bay hooks off to one side, and reeds march down from the shore. In several places, stumps of long-forgotten trees stick up like the arms of bleached skeletons. Dave discovered the water was just as cold and unpromising as at the other two ponds, though the moss wasn't as thick.

Dave waded into the chilly water and sent his spinner in an arcing cast. Working the rod tip up and down to flutter the lure, he retrieved just fast enough to clear the subsurface moss. A small bass whipped after the spinner, nipped at it, then disappeared.

Encouraged, the student put on a night crawler, heaved it out, and let the bait settle a bit before retrieving. A fish hit. The youth worked frantically to keep his first good catch of the day from tangling in the moss. Slowly the fish lost ground, but a last-minute rally in the shallows sent the line whirring from the spinning reel. Dave headed off the rush with enough pressure to turn the tide in his favor. He reached down, grasping the bass by the lower lip with his thumb and forefinger. It was a husky three-pounder. Digging out a fresh night crawler, he impaled it on the hook and made a long cast with the wriggling bait. His slow retrieve brought no takers. A half-dozen efforts were rewarded only with a growing impatience. Somewhat deflated, Dave switched to a spinner, again without success.

A few hours of bassless casting later, the weary fisherman wondered if the folks back in Crawford weren't right. More than once that morning he had heard their "What do you want to go bass fishing for this late in the year? The water's too cold for that, and besides, it's time to think about hunting."

Dave figured he'd already thought enough about hunting for one day. He'd spent the post-dawn hours in the Pine Ridge checking some turkeys he had his eye on for the upcoming season. The day was warm, and there wouldn't be many more like it so Dave decided to try some late-season angling.

A couple of small frogs splashed as the fisherman stepped into some reeds. Frogs didn't have any more business being out than bass did. "Maybe the two should get together," Dave thought. A few false pounces and he had his frog. He stuck a hump-shanked No. 8 hook through the struggling croaker's lips. The young man cast the frog and retrieved with a pumping motion to keep the bait just under the surface. On the third cast, the six-pound monofilament straightened sharply.

The spinning reel drag buzzed as the taker cut a trail for the moss. Dave released the line and let it uncurl between his fingers. The dash ended with the angler tugging at a ball of green scum. For a time, fisherman and fish were motionless, as though sizing each other up. Then the young Crawfordite made his move. Slowly he dragged the fish free. The line held, and the tiring battler came in without further objections. "Two pounds, easy," the Nebraskan grinned, stringing the bass.

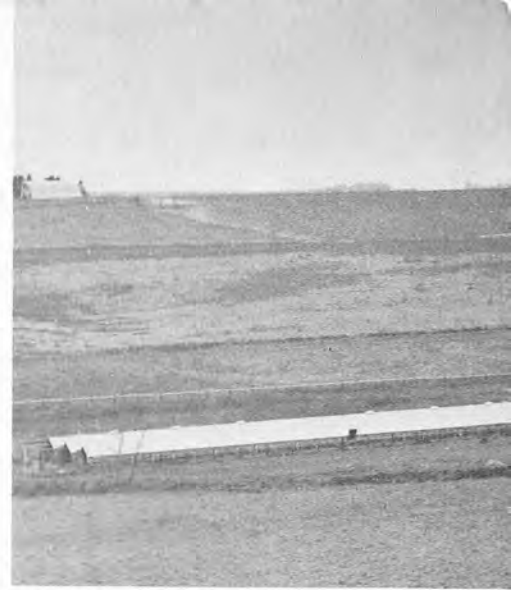
A bit of rearranging was required before the bedraggled frog was ready to go back in service. A few more casts, and Dave made contact again. Soon, another two-pound prize joined the first pair on the stringer.

By then it was late afternoon. The sky was just starting to put on its coat of sunset pink. Dave wondered if there would be time to build a respectable stringer. He made his way across the rocky face of the dam. "Water's down," the angler mused. About 12 feet of the 20-foot wall protruded above the water line. That made the water about eight feet deep. During the summer months the pond

(continued on page 49)



Feminine affinity to soft fur makes the long road from mink to model, profitable one



Ingredients for hash-like meals need freezer's zero temperature

Feminine yen for luxury furs puts Roy Gordon in the chips, thanks to 4,400 little profit makers

by Sheri Aronek

MILADY PREFERS MINK

SINCE PREHISTORIC MAN first bagged his winter coat, furs have dazzled women and drained men's billfolds. Greek warriors donned them, Chinese and Japanese reveled in them, and the Queen of Assyria carpeted the Hanging Gardens of Babylon with their soft luxury.

Today the demand for the costly fur is as great, if not greater than it ever was. New York is hollering for mink pelts to replenish its depleted reserves. And the city's cries are music to Nebraska fur ranchers like Roy Gordon.

On his ranch, one half mile west of Bennington, Roy babies, vaccinates, feeds, and generally mothers 4,400 mink. His every minute is taken up with the feisty little creatures. From March when the mink are mated, to May when the young are born, to December when the pelting begins, and on through the winter months, he

rides herd on one of the largest mink ranches in Nebraska.

"You've heard the song 'from May to December'? Well, that's the theme song of the mink," he grinned. "Through those long months, the mink grow and flourish until their pelts reach their prime. Then they get a one-way ticket to the pelting house."

Although some trapping of wild mink is still done, mink farms are supplying most of the pelts. Breeders have the opportunity to develop new varieties and to bring out costly mutations of various shades and colors. The mink from the wild is usually uniformly dark brown, to nearly black at the tip of the tail, and sometimes sports a white chin or belly. But the ever-popular strains of light mink take special breeding.

"Coming up with a new breed of mink can take generations. You can have about 256 mink before you



Major mink producer, Gordon farm houses thousands of pampered killers before a one-way trip to pelting house

come up with the desired strain," Roy notes. Competition for new mutants is keen among breeders for one new and popular strain means money.

When he speaks of new breeds, Roy is the voice of authority. In 1951 he bought some wild mink in Minnesota. Bringing these light buffs back, he bred them until, two years later, he came up with a Lavender mink.

"I bought two females and a male for \$75. I came up with two Lavender males that I could have sold for \$5,000 apiece. They were the only ones of their kind in the world. But I sold them to a friend and later another one for \$6,100 for the trio. Today Lavender minks are found throughout the world but they got their start in Nebraska."

The mink's coloring has a lot to do with the price. "A good black brings a high price. Commercial darks and browns are the cheapest because they are easier to raise and have more to a litter," Roy claims.

With the increasing interest in light minks, the market has soared for these fair-haired animals. "The Violet is one of the highest. Lights used to be just grand opera stuff, but today they are what the people want," Roy said. The old law of supply and demand helps keep the price up since the light's average litter is three or four compared to the average litter of five or six for darks.

"There's nothing as vicious for his size as a mink," claims Eno Mueller, Roy's son-in-law and helper on the ranch. "If lions and tigers were as vicious, they would be really treacherous." To prove it, he took a Lavender from his cage.

The little fellow fought every inch of the way as Eno grabbed for his tail. "If it weren't for the tail, they'd be hopeless to handle," he grunted. Finally catching the tail, Eno dragged the animal from the cage. The mink hissed, screeched, and snarled.

"Minks are like people," Roy laughed. "Some make more noise than others."

His white teeth gleaming, the mink gnawed at Eno's leather-gloved hand. Eno winced as the animal's fangs dug deeper. Deciding he had had enough, he put the mink back in the cage and pulled the wet glove from his hand. "Hand's just numb," he mumbled surveying its red and swollen marks.

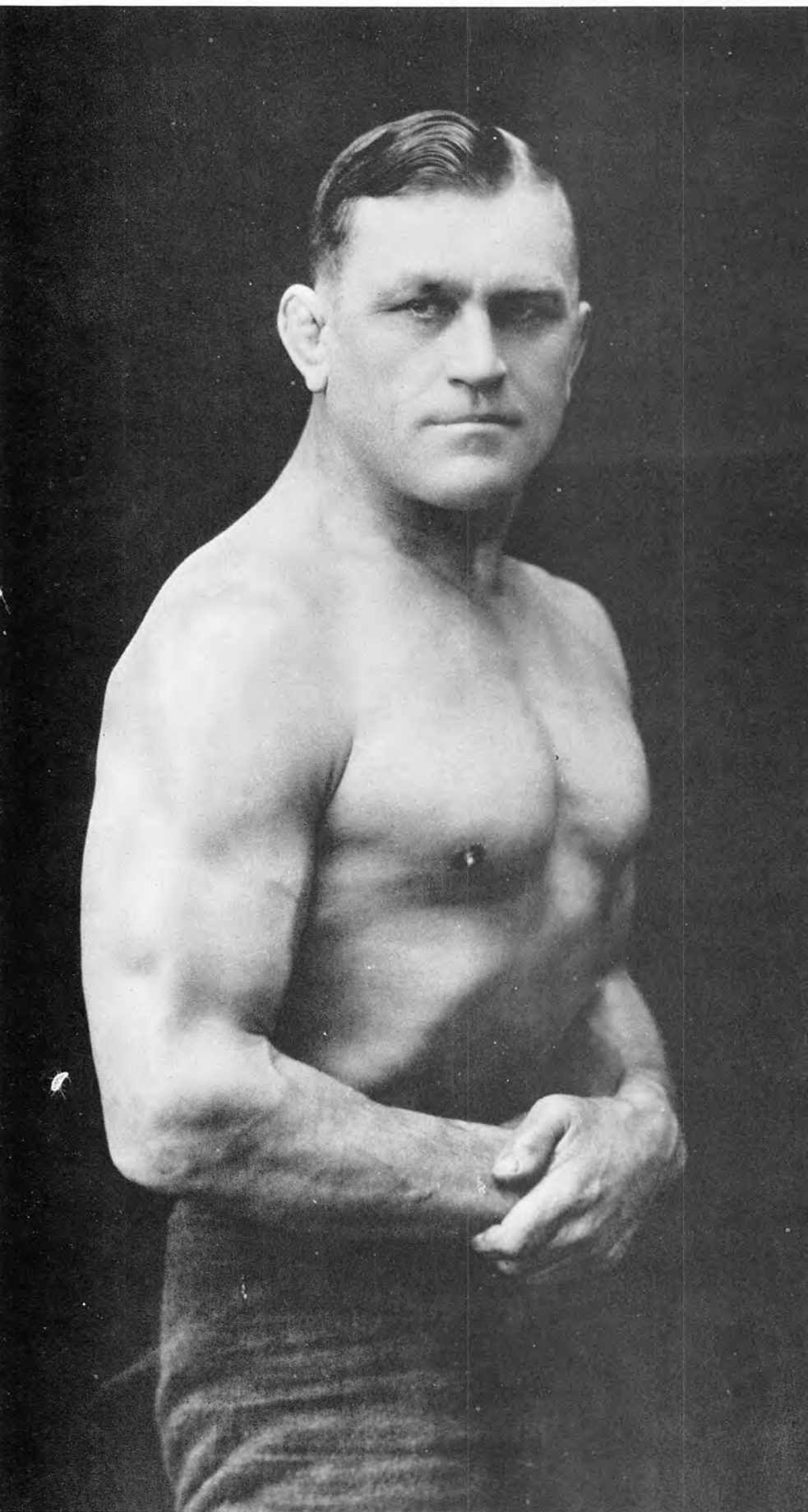
The mink's viciousness keeps other animals away. "We have no trouble with predators. Cats sometimes bother them but come out on (continued on page 49)



Roy keeps a firm grip on tail as mink shows off his vicious nature. Gloves are essential

Towhead owes existence, however short, to mink farms



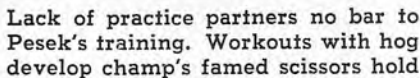


TIGER MAN

*For 29 years, wrestling stars
spooked at meeting this mat
champ. Now 72, John Pesek
has eyes on yet another crown*

by Bill Vogt

Quick to spot opponents' weaknesses, John used speed and agility to gain advantage over slower, heavier foes



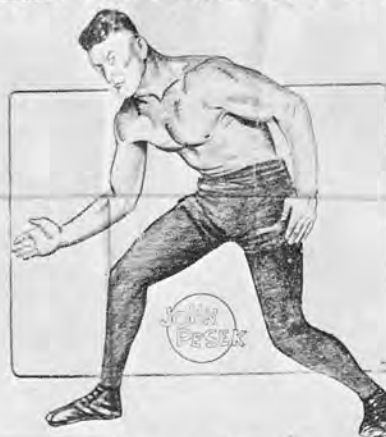
Trio ignored John's challenge but resulting publicity worth more than a purse to undefeated champ

UNPRECEDENTED SPORTING OFFER

The World's Only Undefeated Heavyweight in the Past Four Years

JOHN PESEK

MAKES THE FOLLOWING OFFER:



Neither DeGlane, Londas or Lewis have the courage to meet Pesek in an honest up and up contest, and since Pesek has refused to be a policeman for Lewis, the strangler has never shown enough courage to meet Pesek.

Pesek openly charges DeGlane, Lewis and Londa of being yellow and all three are trick champions.

\$5,000 that Pesek can defeat the following 3 title claimants—one fall each on the same night: Henry DeGlane, Jim Londas and Strangler Lewis

Henry DeGlane, Jim Londa and Strangler Lewis advertise themselves as "Champions." "Trick Champions" is more like the proper name. They have imposed many "Trick Title" matches upon the public in the past few years. Will they continue these "Trick Title" bouts or will all three of them or any one of them show enough courage to meet the world's only undefeated heavy weight in a Bonafide title match. John Pease makes them an offer herewith. His record as the only undefeated heavy weight in the world, in the past four years speaks for itself.

Lewis has no claim at all to the title and has been "washed up" for some time. It is now an old man and is trying to keep before the public by a series of matches with catchweights.

[illegible]

JOHN PESEK

THE AGING FARMER stared at the blocky Angus bull beside him with unseeing eyes. Lost in reverie, one-time wrestling great John Pesek was oblivious to the everyday scenes and sounds of his Ravenna, Nebraska, farm. From far years past, he was once again hearing the roar of the crowd as it dinned approval of the "Champ". From the furious action of the wrestling ring, John's memories shifted to his other great moments in the sporting world, the sound and sight of coursing greyhounds, with his own great racer, Just Andrew, leading the pack home. Breaking the spell, John turned to his visitor.

"Retire? I never did retire. I'm still ready to wrestle anybody, anytime." John Pesek's face stretches into an India rubber grin. "You want my age, on the square, I'll tell you. I'm 70 and a little bit more."

Newspaper accounts of his dogs and rise to the pinnacle of the wrestling world place this "Tiger Man" of Ravenna, as he was called, at 72. Packed into his stocky frame are the still agile muscles which propelled him to a 29-year winning streak in the ring, and paid the tab for a kennel of world-renowned racing greyhounds.

Throughout his glittering career, John's birthplace was always his mainstay and retreat. For here, the

champion-to-be was raised and his roots went deep. He grew up in an era when rough and tumble wrestling and greyhound coursing were popular in Nebraska, so he just naturally gravitated to these two sports. John learned early to rely on himself. When his father died in a farm accident, the boys, Charlie, Curly, Frank, Albert, and 10-year-old "Jawn" were left to find their own ways into the world of men.

"I started wrestling when I was 14," John remembers. "Mother didn't care for the idea, but I was a natural-born wrestler, and loved the sport."

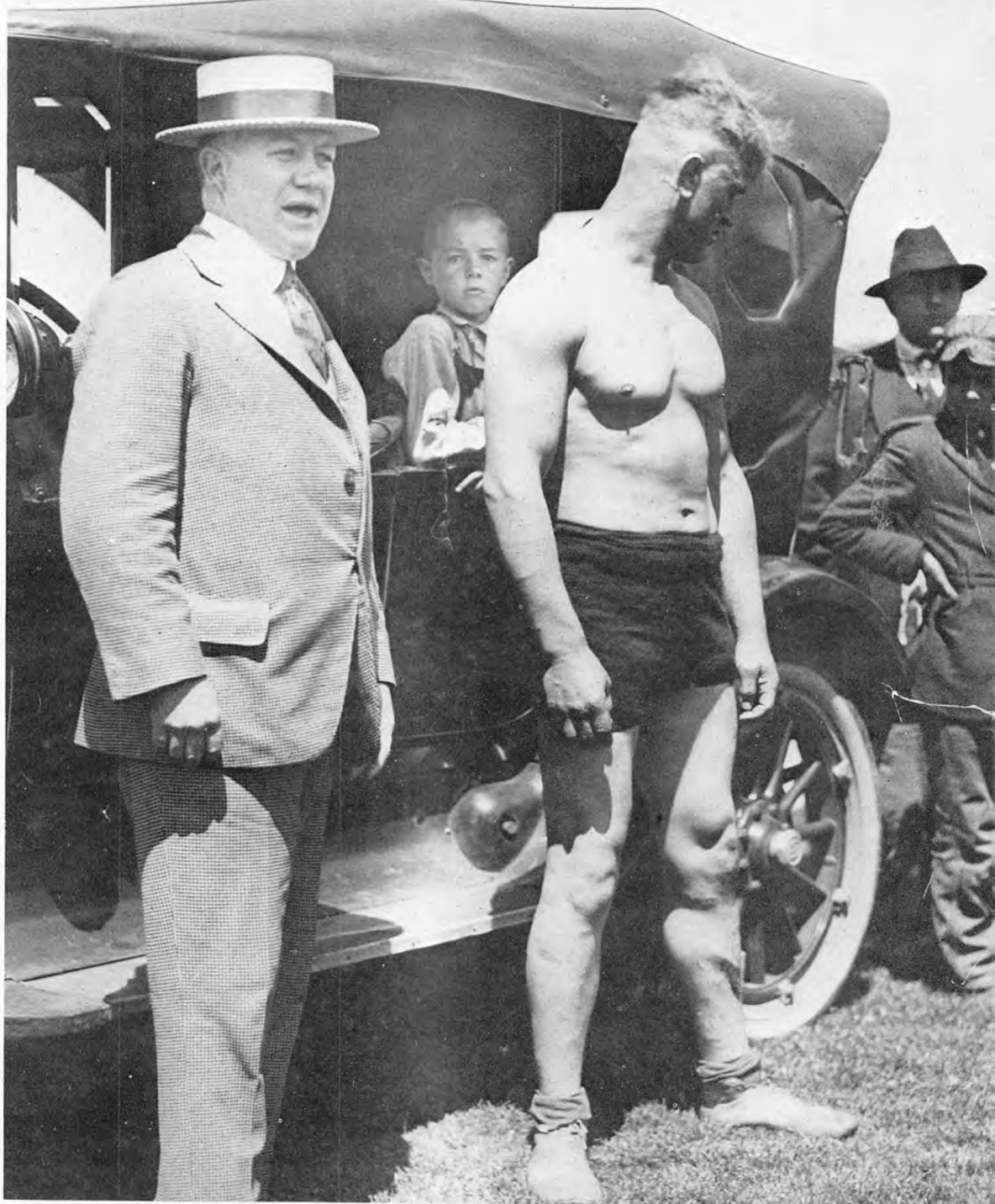
The sturdy youth soon ran out of opponents and started hitting the nearby communities to pick up a few dollars for each match. He went for the purse, not betting, for John still maintains that "you can't beat the gamblers."

It was a natural jump from the small-town circuit into big-time wrestling for Pesek. Sportswriters of John's heyday reflect a period when a match ran for hours, and the grunt and groan boys put their limbs and guts, sometimes their lives, on the block for big purses. A hold-by-hold account of a big match was often embellished by an arm breaking with a "snap" audible to the last row of seats. But the Ravenna newcomer was better than the best and rougher than the

TIGER MAN

Continued

On California trip, Pesek discovers publicity stunts. He lets car pass over him, but police stop other plan



rest. So rough, that the state of New York barred John for life from wrestling there.

Very strong for his size, John could bend an iron bar or horseshoe, but he used speed and leverage as well as strength. This power and speed made a deadly combination. The Nebraskan recalls a match in 1918 when his opponent made the mistake of trying to get John to throw the fight. The two no more than got into the ring, when the powerful Pesek threw his man to the canvas so hard he "bounced like a rubber ball in a cloud of dust."

Soon after the World War I, John headed for California for a bout with Jim Londos, a favorite of the day. There, he discovered the value of the publicity

Just Andrew, granddad of most of today's racing greyhounds, won \$70,000 in purse money for John



stunt. He allowed a fully-load passenger car to run over his body. The feat was performed several times for the edification of the press. The police put the skids to another caper, in which the wrestler was going to use his feet to fend off an approaching car on the Golden Gate Bridge.

The match with Londos was a long affair, but John was declared the winner. The decision was reversed the next day. The fiery wrestler was furious at his win turned to loss. He still fumes at the decision, saying it was tough for a wrestler who wouldn't be "one of the boys."

In 1921, John began a four-year stint as a "policeman" for Ed "Strangler" Lewis. His chore was to protect Lewis from dangerous challengers. One such bout, a tussle with Marvin Pestina, was the one which barred John from New York. The great Lewis' manager, Billy Sandow, later called Pesek the "greatest scientific wrestler of them all".

By 1925, the Tiger Man decided he had had enough of this, and declared his independence by taking on Oreste Vadalfi of Italy. His feline namesake came to the fore as John played with Vadalfi for a half-hour, showing his contempt for the Italian's efforts. Tiring of the farce, John won two falls in rapid succession.

The following year the Ravenna battler took on big names, Stanislaus Zbysko and Nick Lutze, winning both matches. During the Lutze fight, John let the tiger in him go on a rampage. The Nebraskan was trying to work Lutze into a head scissors when John pulled a shoulder muscle, nearly paralyzing his right side. In

spite of the setback, John won the first fall within 27 minutes. Lutze worked on the injured shoulder and managed to pin Pesek. Going into the third fall, John tripped his opponent and in desperation applied a head scissors. He eased off after about five minutes, permitting Lutze to rise. But Lutze's freedom was short lived. Another head scissors brought John the win.

A bad luck match in 1926 resulted in a defeat in St. Louis for Tiger Man. He was pitted against Joe Stecher of Dodge, Nebraska. The two struggled a full five hours before John made a move which ended the contest. Tiger Man sprang for Stecher but missed and was tossed to the coliseum floor, injuring his head. The match went to Stecher. John got revenge in a later match by defeating Stecher in a two-hour match at Wichita for a gate of \$30,000.

His victories were not always quick or easy, but John usually kept control of himself in the ring though he occasionally suffered prematch jitters. However, he exploded in fury during a bout with Finnish Champion Amos Latinan. The referee repeatedly would not call a fall, though John was keeping the upper hand. Pesek finally decided to settle the matter and hurled the 230-pound Finn into the third row of seats. John might have made it to the fourth row, but he was down to 187 pounds at the time, about three pounds under his favorite wrestling weight of 190.

Weary of sportswriters' references to him as Lewis' policeman, John was ready when the opportunity came to go on a wrestling tour of Australia in 1929. Besides, down under fans paid well (continued on page 52)

At 72, John's powerful hands still have the strength and vise-like grip that brought victory over countless mat foes





The harsh plains life sends many scurrying back east. The Haskells, right, accept the land's challenge to make it their home

ROOTS ALONG THE LOUP

by Peggy H. Benjamin

*Obstinate Cora Haskell
met the unyielding prairie
in a battle for beauty*

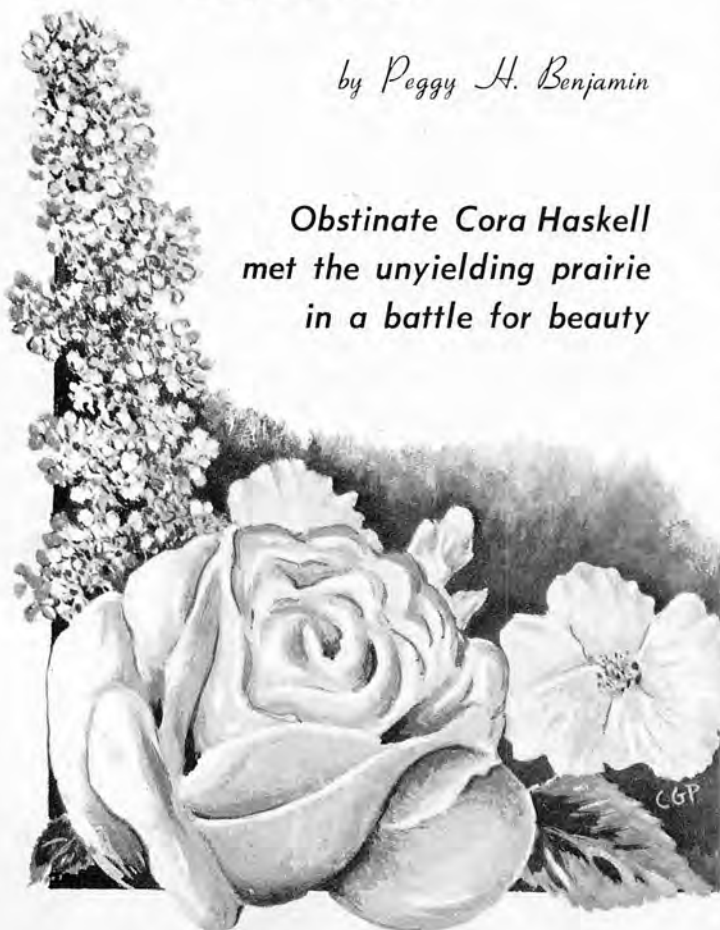
FOR MOST, the 1890 opening of the first bridge across the South Loup River was reason enough for a celebration. The new span was a totem of accomplishment and a promise of progress for Custer County ranchers and settlers who gathered at the bridge for a day of pleasure and self congratulations. For my mother, Cora Haskell, it was a victory of a different kind, a victory won after eight years of hard work, sustained by a burning determination to splash the monotonous plains of central Nebraska with flowering beauty.

It is doubtful if any of the celebrants examined the flowers and greenery that decorated the approaches and railings of the new structure, except for a casual, "ain't they pretty." A few of the more discerning might have noticed that the gay blossoms and lacy fronds were not native to Nebraska but with the visiting, speeching, and a dance to come on its mind, the crowd wasn't thinking of posies. Cora Haskell didn't care. Just seeing her beloved flowers on display at such an important event was reward enough. Flowers were Mother's ruling passion.

Her campaign to bring beauty to the Nebraska prairie began in December, 1882, when, as a bride of three months, she came to Custer County with her rancher husband, Dan Haskell. They drove a buckboard across the frozen plains from Plum Creek, now Lexington, to Dan's ranch on the South Loup. It was a desolate ride. The land was as bare as the weathered buffalo bones that protruded from the snowdrifts along the trail. There wasn't a bush or a tree to break the frozen roll of the land or a bird to add life to the wintry scene until they reached the river. Only the newly painted ranch house with its green shutters offered any welcome to the Ohio-born girl who was beginning a new life on the frontier.

The 25-year-old woman seemed little fitted for the rigorous role of a pioneer wife. Slender to the point of almost being frail, she had a quiet, retiring nature that camouflaged her iron-hard determination and courage. Besides gardening, community responsibilities, and helping her husband run the ranch, she had seven children during her years on the South Loup.

After settling down in her new home, Mother began to evaluate the ranch and its surroundings with a view to making the area bloom with all of the old familiar flowers and shrubs that she knew and loved



at her home in Morning Sun, Ohio. Father, when he bought the ranch and built the house, had unconsciously fitted in with mother's plans. He had an aversion to closed in spaces so two full acres were allocated to the lawn. That gave her plenty of room for her plantings. Mother was determined to make her new home, a flowery show place. Letters to her family revealed nothing of the homesickness and loneliness she must have felt at times. Instead, she asked for flower seeds, roots, and cuttings.

Nature helped, too. Beyond the ranch yard, the banks of the shallow river were nature's hotbeds. Willows, stately cottonwoods, wild plums, chokecherry, buffalo berries, wild grapes, gooseberries, and, in certain places, sand cherries grew in wild profusion. In this prairie land, moisture was the key to all plant growth and the South Loup provided that water.

In a meadow, south of the house, tall reeds and rushes grew out of a swamp that was known as "the government marsh", a landmark on the old government trail leading north from Fort McPherson to the Loup country and the home of the Pawnees. The tangled swamp growth was a haven to a variety of wild life. Mother was always delighted with the graceful white-tailed deer that roamed this place. On hot summer nights she watched the balls of luminous phosphorus—the will-o'-the-wisps—that floated through the shimmering air. This fox fire, formed from the gases of decaying vegetation, was part of the scene that she was to enjoy for 37 years.

But most amazing of all was the thick carpet of bluegrass which thrived in the black soil of the river valley. Father had no idea how the bluegrass got there, but he thought that migrating birds had brought the seed. Soon, the transplanted bluegrass was the beginning of Mother's front lawn.

With the two working together, the ranch slowly began to take shape. Masses of violets growing around

the marsh did well on the shady, north side of the house. From the canyons bordering the valley, they brought small cedar, hackberry, and ash trees which were planted in small groups about the yard with boxelder, cottonwood, and elm.

That summer Father welled up the largest spring and built a frame house over it where Mother could keep her dairy products fresh and cool. The floor of the spring house was paved with limestone from the hills south of the meadow. The narrow path from the front gate was widened and graveled, and its edges were planted with purple flags from Ohio. The transplanted trees and flowers took root and flourished.

Years before Dan Haskell saw the Great Plains as a populated, prosperous, and productive region, and his enthusiasm for the land knew no bounds. Settling first in Cozad, he battled grasshoppers and storms to make his fortune. All the while he kept up a correspondence with Mother, whom he met while visiting friends on his way from Oxford, Ohio, to Nebraska.

Finally, with an inheritance, he bought his ranch on the South Loup River between Arnold and Callaway, choosing the location with his usual foresight. The soil was sub-irrigated with ample water sources about eight feet below the surface. The ground, where the house stood, sloped west. There a wide gravel bed, interspersed with clear sparkling springs and streams, provided a natural background for Mother's plans.

The rains and era of good times and splendid growth continued. Grandfather Haskell, arriving from Oxford, Ohio, for his first visit, brought with him dozens of new cuttings, roots, and seeds galore, his own grafted peaches, plums, pears, grapes, and plans that made father shutter. An avid gardener (*continued on page 51*)

Horse was wedding gift and second only to Ohio girl's love for flowers



*Waterfowl stream across Nebraska
skies in colorful array. Indian legend claims
they carry spring on their powerful wings*

MIGRATION

AS WINTER FADES, countless thousands of waterfowl feel a strange restlessness. An imperious voice comes down the wind, commanding them to forsake the southland for the place of their birth—the north country. For want of a better name, men call it the migrating or nesting instinct. Call it what you will, no feathered traveler can long resist its urgings.

Obedience begins when pintails swirl upward from a Texas pond. Stately pelicans, majestic geese, and a hundred other species follow the pintails, their powerful pinions lifting them to invisible sky highways.

Instincts, springing from the geological mists of the past, speed the migrants along four great aerial channels. Earth-bound mortals call these sky paths, the Atlantic, Mississippi, Central, and Pacific Flyways.





**Suspended against an azure sky, a formation
of snow geese follows mystic voice of wind.
Early trickle soon becomes winged tidal wave**

INDIAN LEGEND claims that returning birds carry spring on their wings. The answers to the mysteries of migrations are not that simple, but day by day, man continues to probe this phenomena. So far, his findings are only partial so much remains to be known about this strange and overpowering instinct.

Although man has labeled the flyways, these are not exclusive avenues, for a bird may go south on one and north on another. Paths of the travelers may mingle and cross for birds, hatched one place, may go far astray to raise their own families but the homing instinct is generally strong.

Metal bands, used by technicians, to trace the migrants tell amazing stories of this unusual urge that sends many waterfowl back to their ancestral homes. But generalities and specifics are often at odds for some migrants are indifferent to any pattern. Some adopt new homes in a completely different part of the country.

A classic example of the homing instinct was demonstrated by a hen mallard near Antioch, Nebraska. Banded in 1927 by the Biological Survey, the hen returned for seven consecutive seasons to a nest box on the roof of a barn. Her successive offspring forsook the family home but not the Central Flyway.



Flaps down and webbed feet ready, Canada geese gracefully come in for a landing

Winter retreats before a storm of wings.
Technicians claim Sand Hills duck flight
exceeds 100 thousand for the 11 species











Surveying cornfield, pintails make the approach for landing. These puddlers lead the pack in the semiannual migration to webfeet's north homes

STARS AND LAND features are navigational aids to birds. A heavy overcast can throw night fliers into directionless confusion. A dense ground fog does the same to those who fly by daylight. Young birds sometimes rely on flyway veterans to guide them, while forces of longitude and latitude may be significant to some like the golden plover who flies over part of a featureless ocean to his winter home in South America.

"Home" is not the same for every bird. Some push on to the fringes of the Arctic, where days for gathering food are long and enemies are few. Others call it a day when they get as far north as Nebraska. A few rebel, reject the migration habit, and stay put.

Flight patterns are tied to the clock and calendar. Early fliers like the teal begin their journey south before winter threatens late-summer warmth. The spring flight also has its impatient advance guard. Certain hours of the day are apparently allocated for feeding, resting, and flying.

◀ Graceful in flight, stately on ground, Sandhill cranes are state's most spectacular migrants. Spring concentrations here are world's largest



Conglomeration of waterfowl floods Nebraska ponds, marshes every year. Some stay to nest while other birds, besieged with wanderlust, move north





Sandhill cranes stop for feeding in Nebraska during spring flights. In fall migrations relatively few birds pause here



Mallard rockets skyward. When he comes this way again, he will be favorite target for hunters' guns



IN THE SPRING and fall, Nebraska hosts a colorful and interesting variety of waterfowl. Even the whooping cranes, now waging an uphill battle for survival, stop in the Platte Valley before resuming their cross country flights. Wild geese by the thousands settle on the Platte and Missouri rivers to add their impressive presence to the kaleidoscope of migrations.

Among our most welcome visitors are the Sandhill cranes. From February until April, these graceful birds dine and dance on the prairies between Grand Island and Ogallala. Very few stop again in the fall and their antics are not as amusing for courtship is in the distant future.

Wild ducks are the star performers in the semi-annual migrations. Mallards, pintails, shovelers, mergansers, and practically every other traveler of the Central Flyway stop in Nebraska. Some go on to other climes, but others recognizing a good thing when they find it, stay here.

The Rainwater Basin Area of south-central Nebraska, the potholes in the Sand Hills, and the marshy backwaters of the Platte River offer suitable nesting and rearing habitats.

These locals, joined by thousands of migrants, provides fine gunning during the seasons. In good duck producing years, the waterfowl hunting in Nebraska borders on the fantastic.

The mystery of migration is far from solved but solution is not a prerequisite to enjoyment of the spring and fall migrations. It is enough that Nebraskans have a front row, center seat for this greatest of natural spectacles. **THE END**

Spring returns as Franklin's gulls flock to feast set by farmer's plow. The gulls have little fear and big appetites after the seasonal flight



NIGHT IN A GHOST TOWN

By Robert Mitchell



One-time store gazes in disbelief of our arrival after years of loneliness and desertion



EVEN IN DAYLIGHT, the ghost town looked eerie enough. Now, with the night as black as the inside of the Devil's pocket, it really swung. The gasoline lantern in Cy Bishop's hand sent our crazy shadow skittering and bouncing over the brittle weeds and tangled rubble. Empty black windows like ebon eye-sockets in a weathered skull, stared from the false fronted, crumbling buildings that crouched in the leaping shadows.

We approached a sagging old door which stood slightly ajar, and I pushed it farther open. Scaling paint flaked off beneath my hand, and the squawl of the uncoiled hinges was amplified to a howl by the empty room. It was a spooky place in the daylight and I knew it would be worse at night when darkness and

our imaginations had free play, but I knew Cy wouldn't back down and neither would I.

The room was unoccupied except for an ancient wood burning heater and our sleeping bags that were spread along the wall.

Strictly for kicks, my friend, Cy Bishop, and I were to spend the night in this old, deserted place. Cy is a seventh grader and I'm a ninth grader at Millard Lefler School in Lincoln. We've been friends for a long time, and neither of us believes in ghosts. We have an older friend, though, that practically turns white at the word "ghost", and when he dared us to spend the night in Andrews, one of Nebraska's few ghost towns, we jumped at the chance to prove our disbelief and give him a rough time in the bargain.

Lou Ell, who had thrown the dare at us, drove us to Harrison, Nebraska, and over the 12 miles of dusty road that serpentine through the tumbled hills. Where the road crossed the headwaters of the White River, he dumped us out near the scattered remnants of what was once a bustling little frontier town. He delivered us early, he said, so we could get the feel of the place. Then with a leer he drove off, leaving us to face the next 18 hours on our own.

According to Charlie Umphenour, the present Judge of Sioux County at Harrison, Andrews began its life

*Fearlessly we accepted a dare to
stay in old Andrews. Its haunting
remains made us pray for daylight*

After nerve-racking trip for
firewood, Cy feeds starving
stove. Bed sounds good to me



In the daylight, we worry not about ghosts. But dilapidated cabin still has an eerie air



Cy's homework lulls him to sleep. But, for me, it takes time to settle down

NIGHT IN A GHOST TOWN

Continued

I thank my lucky stars that I brought flashlight. Owl's hoots put chill in cold night

around 1866, when a man named Hunter built a trading post on the Cheyenne-Fort Robinson stage road. The town lived for 20 years as Hunter. Then the Chicago-Northwestern railroad pushed a single track up the White River from the east. The old engines were water gulpers, and the head of the White River was the last water between Fort Robinson and Van Tassel, Wyoming. The railroad built a tower to service its passenger and work trains in 1887, and the Hunter trading post was moved to the site as a part of the new development.

With the advent of the railroad, it was discovered that another town named Hunter already existed within the state, so the settlement was named Andrews, after the man who owned the land. Even in its day, Andrews was pretty tame for a frontier town.

Bawling cattle tramped along its single row of buildings, driven in for shipment on the railroad. Cain raising soldiers from Fort Robinson overflowed the saloon





On closer inspection next day, 'monster' doesn't seem ferocious as night before

The old town wasn't so eerie in the day. In fact, it seemed friendly and glad to have company for long, lonely night



and dance hall that was established for the entertainment of the railroad men. A second store was opened and a post office added.

Though it lived in one of the most brawling, troubled times of Nebraska's history, Andrews remained remarkably free of trouble. Dark-skinned Sioux often appeared on its street, but no state of siege ever existed. Doc Middleton, a notorious Western outlaw, built a stronghold on a cliff further down the valley, yet none of his exploits ever occurred within the village.

The only incident of note was spawned when a pair of local cattlemen, whose critters became mixed on the open range, quarreled over ownership of some of the beeves. One of the men was found shot to death, and the second was arrested for his murder. There were no witnesses, but the accused was judged guilty because the imprint of his horse's foot was found in the mud in the area of the killing. He was sentenced to the penitentiary, served his time, and returned to the vicinity to live. He claimed he was innocent until his dying day.

When Andrews reached its prime between 1915 and 1918, it boasted 50 inhabitants and a dozen buildings. The townspeople swore it would soon double but their vow never became reality. Fort Robinson and the town of Crawford slowly absorbed its inhabitants. The outbreak of World War II sounded its death knell. The last occupant left in 1963, and the empty buildings with their sagging roofs are all that is left.

"Looks like a blast," Cy said.

Have you ever walked by a group of deserted houses? You know they are only places where people once lived

with kids like us to make them jump. But when the people go, all that is left is the bit of life that the buildings themselves have absorbed. You can't see it but you can feel it. Eyelike black windows follow your movements. This house tells the next you're coming with the creak of a board or the flap of a tattered shade.

At the end of the street, a once white building with its guts torn out, moaned as the light breeze blew through its skeleton. We passed it up for a more substantial building with boarded windows and a sturdy door.

Sunlight glinted through some cracks in the walls and fingered through the dust stirred up from an astonishingly smooth floor. Apparently this building had been a dance hall before it was finally vacated. Chunks of the ceiling hung in tenuous shreds above our sleeping gear. Through a doorway we could see a counter with a footrail. It was a bar, so Cy slapped his hat on the marred top while I poured him an imaginary drink from an imaginary bottle into an imaginary glass. He downed it with a very audible gulp.

Fortified, we raced through a side door and into the sunshine for some exploring. During the next two hours we poked through crumbling cellars and dark attics examining the discarded junk that was helter-skeltered through them. We found a 1947 social security card, a rusted screwdriver, dozens of old Christmas cards, and a glass jar of home canned fruit, discolored with age and unrecognizable.

The old water pumps beside the houses still worked, so we took turns pumping the handles. Dark brown water spouted from the rusted (continued on page 54)



With suitable habitat, mallards have chance to beat other odds. Break in long drought is bright spot, but man-made drainage is threat

WHAT ABOUT THE MALLARD?

by *George Schildman*
Assistant Project Leader

*A one-bird limit is hard to accept, but
after reading this, it is easy to see
why cutback is in order*

LAST AUGUST, when the one-mallard-a-day limit was established by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, disappointed duck hunters started shooting questions like these.

"What has happened to this favorite duck of the waterfowling fraternity, that stringent restrictions were again imposed for the 1965 season? Is anything being done or can anything be done to improve the plight of the greenhead? Do the men, charged with the responsibilities of safeguarding this natural resource, really know how to manage the species? What is the outlook for the near future and what are the long range prospects?"

Some of the askers were genuinely concerned with the preservation of the mallard and all other waterfowl, others were voicing their, "I want mine right now" attitude, but, regardless of the motivation, all the questions have merit and deserve to be answered if they can. Some of the queries can't be answered at this time but they can be discussed and new light shed on the mallard situation.

What brought about the regulation restricting the daily bag limit to one mallard in 1965? Through past decades, mallards, as well as other ducks, have experienced high and low population levels. The most drastic



Natural hazards will take toll of this nine-bird brood



Bait trap is important aid in capturing mallards for banding and other studies. Producing five ducks for four is researchers' hope for not-too-distant future

lows in recent times occurred during the drought years of the 1930's and again in the late 1950's and early 1960's. These can be largely attributed to the reduction of production habitat because of the droughts and mortality rates that were greater than the annual increment. In other words, more ducks died each year than were produced. Through the most recent series of dry years, continental mallard populations declined to the point where the 1965 breeding population was the lowest since modern records began in the mid 1940's. Possibly it is the lowest it has been in the past several decades. That was the dismal outlook with which we started the year. Late fall rains in 1964 and the above average snowfall during the winter over a large part of the prairie pothole regions of Canada and the North Central States, raised hopes that recovery of duck populations was in the offing.

Water supplies improved considerably but nature was still in command. Adverse spring weather made for a general failure of early nesting attempts. Mallards are generally early nesters, but they are also persistent renesters. Because late nesting success is more difficult to evaluate, its total contribution to the fall flight was more uncertain. However, indications were that late nesting successes could offset a large part of the early

failures. The outlook was optimistic that improved production in 1965 over 1964 would be sufficient to compensate for the reduced breeding population and the flight southward last fall would be similar to that of 1964.

With the fall flight expected to be about the same, why then only one mallard in the daily bag limit in 1965, when there were two the season before? The 1964 regulations were obviously too liberal as the 1965 breeding population was reduced about 20 per cent below the 1964 level to hit a new low in modern times. Much debate, discussion, and study of the data preceded the final formulation of the 1965 regulations. Considerations are given to the sportsmen and to regulations which will provide the greatest recreational opportunity to the greatest number of people and yet not jeopardize the welfare of the resource. When all factors were considered, it was decided that a one-mallard-a-day limit came closest to fulfilling the requirements.

Recent surveys have added to the knowledge which is important to management of this renewable resource. Some of the facts that had a significant bearing on the final adoption of the one mallard limit can help explain the restrictive regulation.

Unlike upland game species that have a high natural mortality each year, the mallard has a much longer natural life. Once he survives the perils of babyhood, the greenhead has a fair chance to make it the rest of the way. It follows that the gun is the major factor contributing to the annual mortality of the greenhead after he is old enough to fly. The harvest of upland game by hunters is a replacement of natural mortality to a much greater extent than it is with the mallard. This means that the duck-hunter take has to be more closely anticipated in order to (continued on page 50)

From release to final fate, a leg band traces mallard's path





THAT LAST GLASS of water you drank was about five billion years old. For there is about the same amount of water today as there was eons ago when "darkness was upon the face of the deep". Since then, hardly an additional new drop of water has been created. The original water is still going through nature's wonderful cycle.

It all began billions of years ago when, geologists maintain, the earth was virtually nothing but a searing molten mass, radiating its heat into the cold, empty reaches of space. Then, as the liquid rock material cooled, a cloud of gases began to form as the temperature dropped near the boiling point. The vapor cloud was so thick that no ray of sunlight could break through to the scalding surface below.

The cooling process continued, and finally the super-saturated vapor began to condense and fall as rain. That vapor was virtually the only forming of water in the

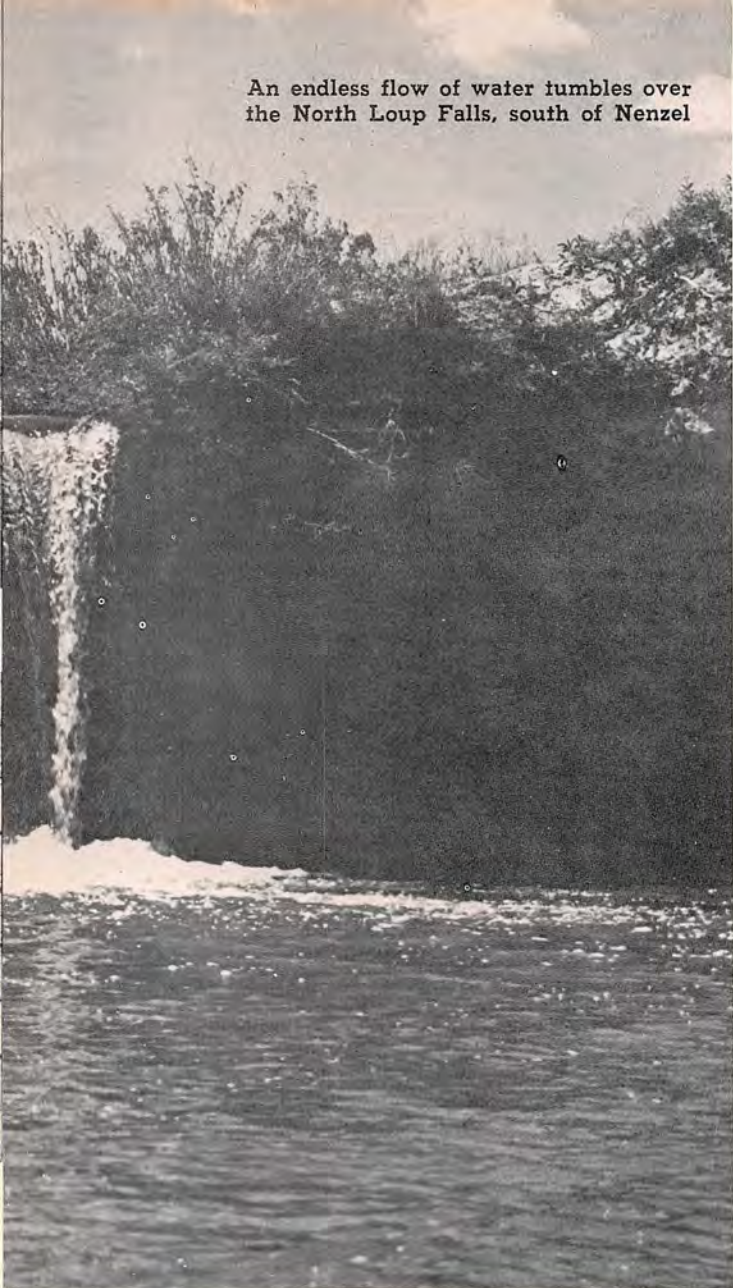
Just over two per cent of world's water lies perpetually imprisoned as ice and snow

An endless flow of water tumbles over
the North Loup Falls, south of Nenzel

SAME OLD WATER

*From tap to salty ocean and back again,
this vital fluid measures vintage in billions*

by Richard Cote



world. Today's fleecy clouds are but repetitions of that first vapor blanket. Probably, these first rains were stupendous. But the earth below was still so hot that falling rain sizzled away before it ever touched this primeval surface. Instead, it returned to the atmosphere again as vapor.

This battle between falling rain and boiling rock likely continued for many thousands of years in the longest and darkest night the world has ever known. In time, however, the rain won and the earth's surface cooled sufficiently to hold water in liquid form. From that point on, for century after century, rain came down in ceaseless torrents. The impenetrable vapor barrier gradually became thinner and thinner until, eventually, the warmth of the sun broke through to the surface below. During this cooling period, too, the earth's crust evolved. Wrinkles developed, giving birth to mountains and valleys. Some of these valleys became the homes of



**Beauty of Fort Falls at Fort Niobrara Refuge
ever new but water that creates it is eons old**

oceans—huge unsalted watery wastes which would not be changed to brine until the rocks began to erode and send their minerals to the fresh-water seas.

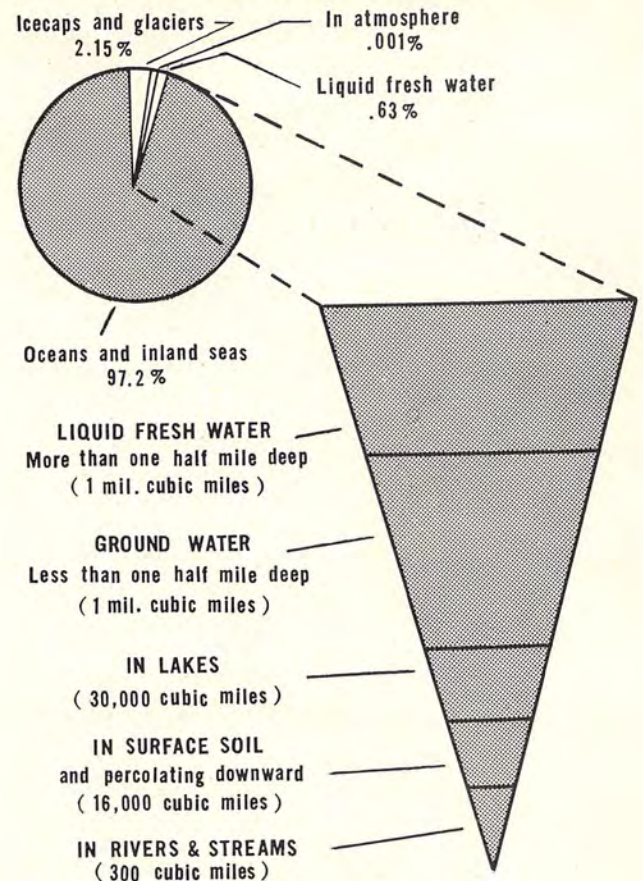
With sunlight reaching the newly-formed lands and seas, a new phase began: the endless cycle of evaporation-rainfall-evaporation, which goes on even today. It is known as the hydrologic cycle. In time, too, another mystery was posed for future man to unravel. The beginning of life. About 500 million years ago the first protoplasm, composed largely of water and minerals, came into being in the warm, shallow seas. Life had to wait until after that first deluge when enough minerals had eroded and been swallowed by the sea.

From that start came rudimentary plant life, and after that increasingly complex animal life, both composed largely of water. In fact, you are about 70 per cent water, or 45 quarts. The 100 pounds of water in a 150-pound man are so important that he will die if he loses more than 10 pounds of it by dehydration.

Whether in or around organic life, water still plays a crucial role during this cycle. Man can not exist without water, nor could any other living thing in the Chain of Being, each dependent upon some lower form of life.

Water necessary to the survival of life comes in many forms and in many ways. About 97 per cent of all the world's water is stored in the biggest ponds of all, the oceans and inland seas. Another 2.15 per cent

THE WORLD'S WATER



SAME OLD WATER

continued

Water at Rocky Ford only fraction of 300 cubic miles carried by all rivers



sits frozen, most of it in the great ice sheets in Antarctica and the Arctic. Less than one per cent is in liquid fresh-water form, only .001 per cent is in the air.

Two million cubic miles of liquid fresh water are stored underground. Lake Superior holds only about 3,000 cubic miles, and only 300 cubic miles are carried by the world's rivers and streams. Along almost any American river the same gallon of water is many times busy. It cools blast furnaces, bathes babies, serves office buildings, sprays water skiers, and spins turbine blades.

In this country, the greatest user of this white gold is industry, which uses water in astonishing quantities. It takes about 1,400 gallons to produce one dollar's worth of steel, nearly 200 gallons for a dollar's worth of paper. One barrel, 42 gallons, of petroleum requires 770 gallons of water, and the country's refineries are producing more than 8,000,000 barrels of petroleum per day.

Another 200,000 gallons goes into a ton of viscose rayon, 600,000 gallons into a ton of synthetic rubber. The two-thirds of a ton of steel in your automobile required 4,400 gallons of water. And it takes more water to manufacture a square yard of nylon than it does to grow and process the equivalent amount of cotton, wool, or silk.

Agricultural irrigation is the nation's second largest consumer of water. About 141 billion gallons a day are used, and it is estimated that this will increase by

1980 to about 166 billion gallons a day. After it is used, most of this water is lost in evaporation to begin nature's hydrologic cycle all over again.

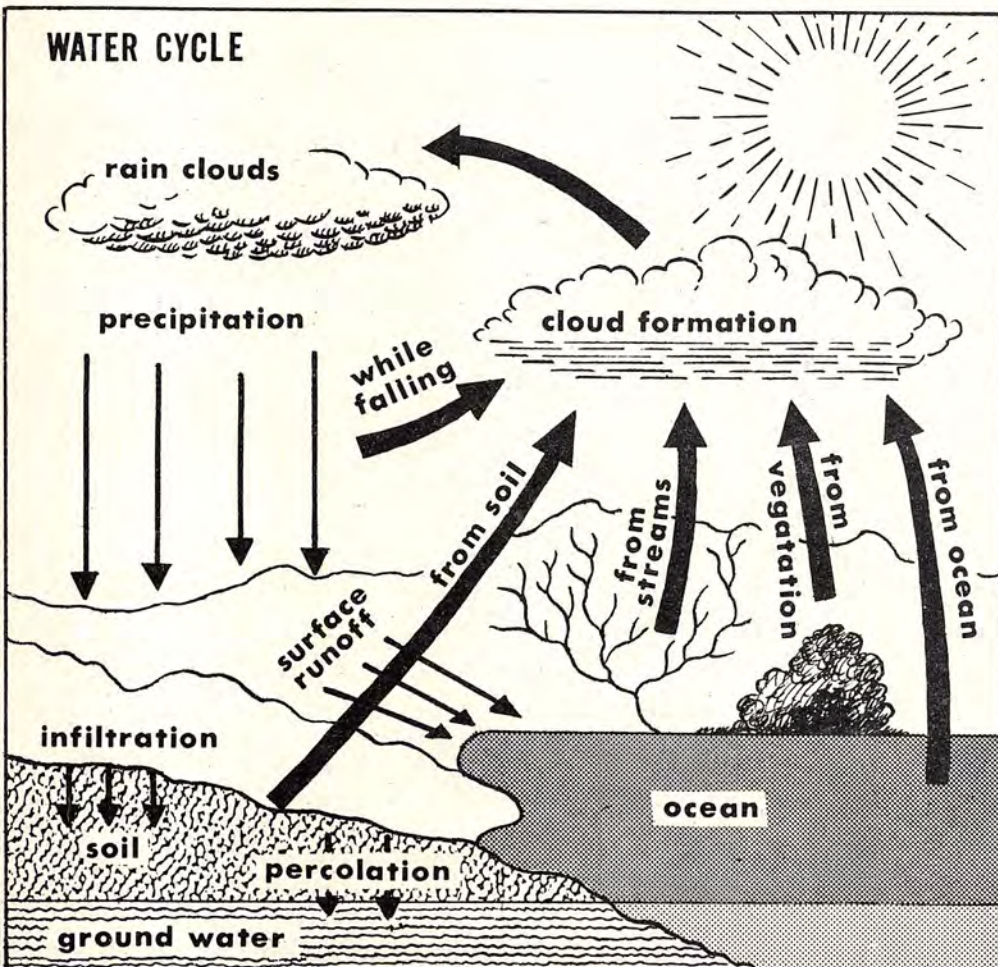
Municipalities, the third largest user of water, now need more than 22 billion gallons a day, but by 1980 this will jump to 37 billion gallons. It takes three gallons to wash dishes by hand, but twice this amount by machine, no water at all to put garbage in a can, but two gallons each day to flush refuse down a drain.

Nebraskans are heavy users of water. In 1960, they utilized 3,200 gallons per person—more than twice the national per capita average. Quick to adopt technological advances, the state's number of irrigation wells has shot from six wells on 360 acres in 1910 to more than 27,000 wells on 2,100,000 acres today, an increase of 450,000 per cent, making NEBRASKAland fifth among all states in irrigated acreage.

Groundwater is Nebraska's gold mine. Reserves are estimated at 1,678,816,000 acre-feet, or 547 trillion gallons of water. This is enough to put the state under 34 feet of water or as much as falls over the entire state during 19 to 20 years of average rainfall. Financially, this liquid, underground Fort Knox is worth \$16.7 billion, or about \$11,895 per person.

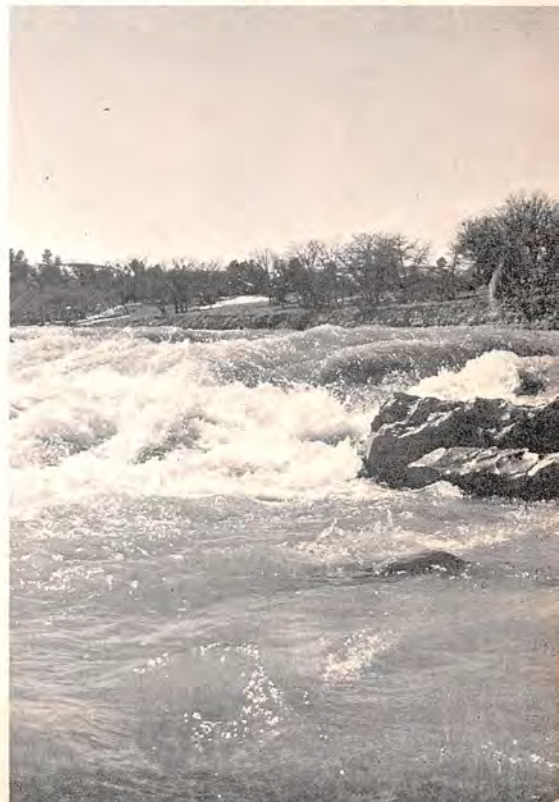
Not all of our water is hidden, however. The state can also boast some 40,000 lakes, including 3,350 with more than 10 surface acres, plus 10,987 miles of rivers and streams. Above or below (continued on page 53)

WATER CYCLE



Start of hydrologic cycle is as academic as asking which came first, chickens or eggs

Niobrara adds to yearly 3 thousand plus gallons used by each Nebraskan





Union Pacific Museum, Oldest Nebraska Church

WHERE-TO-GO

THE CLAIMING OF the West was within one hour of reality as the two iron horses rumbled closer and closer together. About 1,500 milling, cheering spectators were assembled at the final end-o'-track spot that meant so much to those who worked to join East and West. The air was electric with excitement as the tension mounted.

Finally, at 11 a.m., May 10, 1869, the locomotives met in a shower of champagne, ceremony, and pandemonium. Atlantic and Pacific were wedded when the famous golden spike was tapped home with one last blow of the spike hammer. An event that was to leave deep etchings on NEBRASKAland tourism was history.

It was the completion of the great transcontinental railroad at Promontory, Utah, and the realization of a dream that opened the great western expanses for settlement.

The Union Pacific Railroad proudly calls Omaha its home. Even though Nebraska's Gateway City is 1,086 miles east of that final historic site, a gold mine of mementos and items reminiscent of that last spike and the early West is on display in a fascinating museum located less than two miles west of the Missouri River.

Union Pacific Railroad's Historical Museum is located on a ground floor quadrant of the U. P. Building at 15th

and Dodge Streets. On center stage is an unusual and significant collection of items which mirror the epic struggle of both the railroad and the West as experienced by thousands of railroaders and pioneers.

Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, the museum is a "must see" in Omaha. The spirit of the West is housed there to live on and on for NEBRASKAland and the nation to appreciate.

After a modest beginning in 1921, the collection of guns, documents, photos, ticket punches, badges, and other articles of railroad interest in the museum has grown in size and popularity. Today, it hosts more than 3,500 visitors each month. Since June of 1939, when records were started, more than 780,000 guests have signed the register. One recent month brought visitors from 12 foreign countries.

All displays in the museum are fashioned around one or more of five central themes. These are The Railroad and Early Equipment section, The Outlaw Period, Indians, Tribute To Lincoln, The Pioneer, and The Railroad Library.

Each item has been donated and some articles have been judged to be priceless. Among the latter are several silver passes and one silver watch

believed to be those of frontier scout Jim Bridger, a famed figure of the early West.

The pride of the museum is the collection honoring President Abraham Lincoln. It was Lincoln who, in 1862, signed into law a bill creating the Union Pacific Railroad and authorizing that company to blaze the "Big Medicine Trail" with tracks of steel. A rare executive order issued by Lincoln is the most prized original document in the museum. It appointed Springer Harbaugh director of the railroad in 1863, and is signed "Abraham Lincoln" rather than "A. Lincoln" which was his familiar signature. Many of the original furnishings of the famous Lincoln Car are on display.

One glass case holds the leg irons used to shackle "Big Nose George" Parrott, a Wyoming desperado, and the top half of his skull. Lesser known criminals are represented by one case filled with deadly weapons, all fleeced from criminals by Union Pacific special agents. Tomahawks, bows and arrows, and Indian artifacts preserve the story of the American Indian.

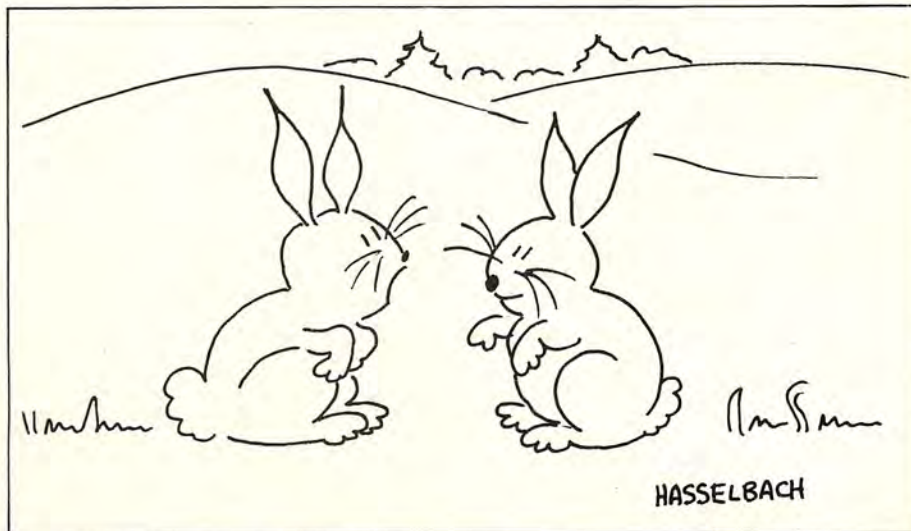
Easy access to the documentary history of the transcontinental railroad is available in an extensive display of documents, maps and pictures, all encased in swinging panels of glass for easy viewing. "Farms at \$3 an acre, and not a foot of wasteland", is a typical advertisement barking from a bright red panel of posters that once enticed settlers to Nebraska.

Visitors to another NEBRASKAland tourist attraction meet history face to face near the Missouri River. At Nebraska's oldest church in Bellevue, one can feel the deep dedication of the Presbyterian missionaries who built the church in 1856, and those who followed to keep spirit and structure shored up.

The building, nearly 100 years old, is in good condition, and when the wind blows through the three towering Elm trees nearby, some say you can even hear the story of missionaries who sang while bricking up the walls of their first church.

THE END

Prevent heartbreak and hunger across the world — each dollar sends a Food Crusade package through CARE, New York 10016.



"As near as I can figure out, our father is a high silk hat."

NEVER TOO COLD

(continued from page 15)

had been even lower, congregating the fish in the holes. The few fishermen who came pulled in some fine bass.

Winter kill and evaporation during dry years are the biggest dangers to fish populations in the ponds. Many impoundments have too unstable a water level to support fish. Stocking is carried out by the Nebraska Game Commission, and the Oglala Grassland is administered by the U. S. Forest Service. Maintenance of the dams and fences is handled by the Sugarloaf Soil and Water Conservation District in a working agreement with the Forest Service.

Most of the catchment impoundments were built for livestock watering in the late 1930's and early 1940's. The 94-thousand-acre grassland was first administered by the Soil Conservation Service, then turned over to the Forest Service as a Land Utilization Area in 1954. The unit was designated to Oglala National Grassland in 1960. About two years ago, the Forest Service launched a complete survey of the area and recreation aspects were tagged for development.

The Government is now in the process of laying out camping facilities and access roads, and determining what species of trees will be suitable for planting in the planned recreation sites. In addition to the face lifting, names are being selected for each pond. It is hoped the names will fall into common usage to replace number designations and local names. But Avey doesn't worry too much about names. He says the fishing, hunting, and rock hounding are more important. He foresees a bright future for the ponds, whether they're called "Board Gate", "Agate", or something else. The lure of the outcroppings alone is already enough of an attraction to bring rock hobbyists from all over the country.

Dave paused to pick up a varicolored, flattened pebble. He skipped it over the water. It takes a trained eye to recognize the beauty hidden in an otherwise plain-looking rock. He had more bass to catch, anyway.

An evening chill was already toying with the temperature when the angler started working the west shore near some reeds. He found a couple of frogs and tucked one in a paper bag. Patient casting netted him an occasional bass, and the stringer was gaining enough weight to be a very satisfying burden. The bass were all between two and three pounds or so, indicating they were all from one stocking.

Strikes became more frequent, requiring several more inroads on the frog population. Few of the little creatures were more than two-fish frogs. "I guess time is as important as the kind of bait today," Dave reasoned. Apparently the bass were on their last foray of the day. But darkness comes early in October in the Pine Ridge

country, and picking out a dusk-shrouded trail is no picnic.

Dave laid the heavy stringer of fat bass on the bank and pulled off his waders. Sweater weather was upon him, and it was time to go. A pair of golden eagles winged silently past, putting a seal of approval to a perfect day. One more gate plus 23 miles of road lay between the fisherman and home.

A cloud bank, building in the west, indicated the possibility of a shower. Until all-weather roads are punched in, the Oglala ponds probably will not see heavy public use, but residents like Dave know fish are there for the taking now—if it doesn't rain. THE END

MILADY PREFERS MINK

(continued from page 17)

the worse end of the deal. The mink will grab at a paw and pull until most of the cat ends up on the mink's side of the small-meshed wire cage," Eno said.

In the wild, these small animals, averaging about two feet in length and four pounds in weight, will attack larger animals. Clamping their strong teeth on the neck region, a little pressure soon ends the struggle. A mink's natural enemies include such predators as man, dogs, owls, foxes, coyotes, and bobcats.

The teeth also help this clever hunter nab his meals. His fare includes small mammals, bird eggs, frogs, fish, mice, and muskrats. But in captivity, he is served a hash-like concoction once a day.

"We feed them anything. Beef lungs, liver, chickens, turkey, fish flour, cottage cheese, lard, and wheat germ oil

go into the grinder," Roy said. But feeding mink presents problems.

The three acres of pens, placed in 17 sheds, take three hours of feeding time. Two feed wagons, with a large tub and a seat for one man, putt up and down the aisles as a long hose from the tub squirts down the right amount of food on the top of each cage. Walk rails along the tops of the sheds make it easy going for a third man on foot. Roy's mink gorge themselves on about one ton, or 22 tubs, of feed a day. That represents a \$125 tab.

The 4,420 pens, if placed end-to-end, would cover 1½ miles. Wire cages have a board box where the mink make their nests of hay and sugar cane. "If you put the hay in, the mink will throw it out. So we put it on the wire top of the wood nest and let him pull it through. That way it stays in," Roy explained.

Water bowls are attached to the front of the cage. "These cause problems in the winter when the water keeps freezing," Roy said. The bowls are the only contacts the naturally aquatic mammals have with water. Normally, in the wild, the mink lives near water and spends much of his time in the streams and marshes. He can swim and dive as skillfully as a muskrat and his thick, oily fur is highly adapted for aquatic life. This call of the deep beckons the captive animals at times.

"In the summer they'll splash water from their cups on their necks. That's where the blood vessels are, of course, and the mink are trying to cool off."

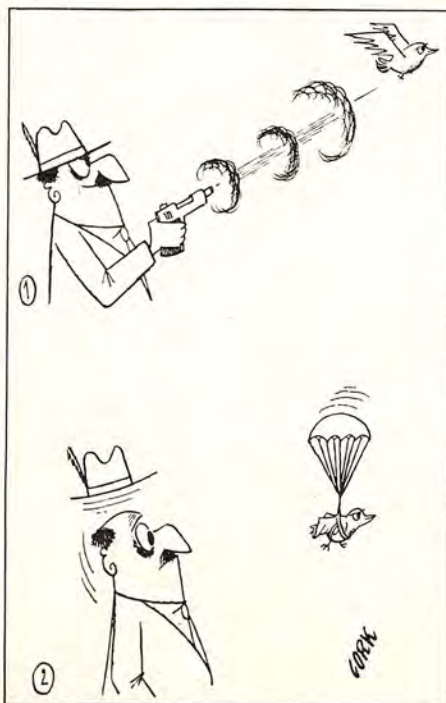
The nearby stream sometimes comes to the mink. Last year, floods drowned 868 animals. High water could have cost Roy a fortune but the insurance came through with \$20 a head. Until the insurance adjustor came, the dead mink were kept in the farm's freezer.

The occasional mink that escapes sometimes returns. He becomes an anonymous animal and is placed in an unmarked cage. Ordinarily, each fur bearer has his number, and close track is kept of which male is mated with which female. When the stork arrives in May, the parents' numbers and the number in the litter are marked above the cage. Later, the grade of fur is added to help earmark the new arrivals for their final fate.

When the young start arriving, Roy's outfit buzzes with activity. The new mink must be constantly fed for the first three weeks. How well this is done determines their later quality. Only Roy, Eno, and helper Ron Hanson go near the cages during this critical period. If a stranger gets close, the mother will kill her family.

During vaccination, each mink is carried from his cage and given injections for encephalitis, food poisoning, and distemper. "We figure it costs about 20 cents per animal for these inoculations," Roy said.

Each one must be carried into the light for grading. A representative from a New York firm comes to grade the mink in the fall. This company will



auction the pelts for Roy after they have been dressed in Chicago.

When the fur gets prime around Thanksgiving, the pelting begins. About $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch under the long, stiff, glossy guard hairs lies the soft, dense underfur. Roy must go below this underfur and examine the animal's hide to determine when the pelt is prime. Blue hide means the pelt is unprime; white, prime; and yellow-white, over prime.

Of his 4,400 mink, Roy keeps about 1,000 females and 200 males for breeders. The others are pelted.

Roy hires a man to kill the mink. "We use a neck-breaker. Actually, that's more humane and is instant death. We tried gassing them but that's dangerous and can be harmful later when the carcasses are used for tankage," Eno said.

The carcasses are carried to an oblong brick building where they are placed on a wire above a long table. From there they go to another table where the hide is cut from hind foot to hind foot. "The tail is pulled out and the hide and carcass attached to a machine that pulls the pelt off the body. About 400 mink a day go through the skinner."

From the skinning machine, the pelt goes to a cone-shaped cylinder where a knife and suction tube remove the fat. This fat is shipped to Chicago to be used for cosmetics. "It's the most penetrating fat. It beats lanolin by a hundred miles. And it melts at room temperature. A drop on a shoe goes straight through," Eno said. Paper towels are used to clean up so the fire danger from greasy rags is eliminated. Pelted carcasses go to a nearby rendering plant for tankage.

The skins are then pulled on boards to dry. "It doesn't matter how well we put them on the boards," Roy said, "since we have ours dressed in Chicago. For \$1.50 a pelt, they are dunked in liquids and stretched. Then they are packed and sent to New York to be sold at auction."

Mink that were not killed are bedded down for the winter. Males are caged outside the sheds. "They have to be out in the light. Light in the eyes has something to do with the breeding cycle. Some breeders use artificial light but I don't fool around with nature, so the mink stay out in the open," Roy said.

Gordon has been in this business for 22 years. In that time, he has come up with a few winners. He sends mink that Eno chooses to shows. "I select them on the basis of texture, continuous color—if it blends into one color, and size," Eno explained.

In 1961 the payoff came when Roy walked away with four trophies at the International Mink Show in Minneapolis, a first for a Nebraskan. "They know now that Nebraska mink are as good as any on earth," the champ claims.

President of the Nebraska Mink Breeders, Roy owns one of 90 mink ranches in Nebraska. At \$21 a pelt

the cash adds up. When one of Roy's beauties sold for \$110, it was extra apiece on the cake. One mink raiser got \$100,000 for his pelts.

"I have about \$100,000 invested in the ranch. The sheds are worth \$2,500 apiece. Our freezer cost \$11,000. But it's a good investment. Women still love their mink coats and stoles. And one full-length coat takes 55 pelts, so I don't have to worry about mink going out of style or furriers having a surplus," he said.

As long as milady prefers a mink around her neck to the wolf at the door, Roy won't be wrong. THE END

WHAT ABOUT THE MALLARD?

(continued from page 43)

guard against an over harvest. Duck harvest also differs from that of upland game in that the harvest is not related to the size of the available population. As the harvest reduces the available upland game and the time and effort necessary to bag it increases, the hunting effort drops off. Because waterfowl utilize restricted wetland habitat, the kill is related to a much greater extent to hunting regulations than to population levels.

In order to again enjoy the more liberal regulations of the mid-1950's, it will be necessary to increase the breeding populations. With the drouth broken and the breeding habitat again supplied with water, now is the time to take advantage of the situation and speed up the recovery of the breeding population. Restrictive regulations were imposed in 1965 to speed up the accomplishment of this objective. Barring unforeseen adversities, this will provide more birds next season and in seasons to come.

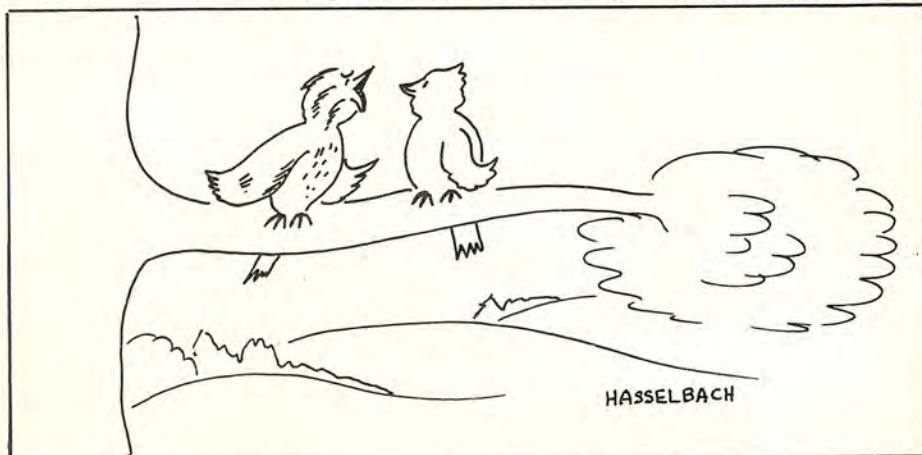
Now what about the future? Although a great deal of research data are still needed to better manage waterfowl, and mallards in particular, recent gains in knowledge have been a great help in coping with the present situation. Continental population levels have become more clearly defined

and surveys to measure production have been improved. These gains, coupled with a better understanding of the effects of regulations on the harvest, have added confidence and sophistication to the selection of regulations governing the harvest. Increased knowledge of life histories, movements, habits, and reactions to habitat changes improve management and hence the outlook for the future.

The big bright spot is the apparent break in the six-year drought over much of the mallard's breeding range. Total desirable recovery of greenhead populations is not likely in one year, but nature's tendency to compensate following a series of adversities may provide a pleasant surprise next season. Two, three, or more years may be required to rebuild the population to the capacity of the breeding grounds. However, if sufficient recovery is made this year, less restrictive regulations may allow a moderate increase in the harvest next season and at the same time allow the breeding population to continue its gains.

More water is a great help but changes are occurring and others will occur that have an impact on the resource. All of these will effect future mallard hunting. The destruction of wetlands in the pothole region of the prairies, which provides the bulk of the mallard breeding habitat, is going to continue. Despite efforts to combat it, the rate of wetland destruction is likely to increase rather than decrease. However, there are factors that may offset the effects of some of this loss. Increasing knowledge could provide better utilization of the resource, and improved management techniques may be able to produce five ducks where four have been produced in the past. Research could conceivably provide other means of adding available birds to the fall flight. A greater awareness of the tremendous values of our water resources would help slow the rate of destruction.

The human population growth, more leisure time, and better transportation methods are other changes which will affect the duck hunter. A better public



"I'd like to get hold of the person who named me a yellow-bellied sapsucker."

appreciation of the need to share the resource is essential if a small portion of the ever-growing demands are to be satisfied. Changes of attitudes and traditions do not come easy, but come they must if increased needs are to be met with a limited resource.

There are a lot of unknowns in the future. Changing land use and demands for space can affect the supply of habitat, new impoundments will affect distribution and other aspects of the mallard's life, pollution abatement could improve some waters, pesticide use and misuse, and new products, more or less harmful, or products to counteract the harmful effects of present day materials may all play a part. Advancement of knowledge in many areas could brighten or darken the long range outlook.

There is another aspect of the future that needs to be exploited. For all who know the excitement and anticipation of tomorrow's hunt, and thrill to the sound and sight of mallards on the wing, and who want to experience these joys again, there is a part to play. It requires a sincere appreciation for the resource and the enjoyment it affords. Many already have it to the nth degree, but too many are still indifferent to the preservation of this resource and the sport. Individual contributions are apt to be small, but multiply them by two million duck hunters and the total benefits will be considerable.

There are numerous seemingly insignificant things that every duck hunter can do to help preserve his sport. Crippling losses will occur, but a conscientious effort to reduce this waste will make an appreciable increase in the number of ducks. The use of a good dog and a more persistent search for downed birds can help reduce this loss. There will be more ducks in the future if hunters refrain from skybusting, where the chances of crippling and the resultant waste are great. Skybusting and other needless shooting that deposits lead shot in the water helps contribute to the annual loss. Two to three per cent of our continental population of waterfowl die of lead poisoning when feeding birds inadvertently swallow pellets. A sincere effort to discourage undesirable practices, a chance to influence the saving of a small single marsh from destruction, compliance with regulations, and behavior befitting that of a dedicated sportsman are of immeasurable worth.

The quest for new knowledge will be speeded up by reporting all bands from banded birds, and responding as accurately as possible to questionnaires for information. Co-operation with wing collection surveys is another aid that will hasten the day when more and more ducks come wheeling into the blocks.

The accumulated benefits of these small efforts can help our greenhead prosper in a land that can ill afford to ignore his present plight. THE END

WILL-O'-THE-WISP

(continued from page 11)

covey exploded and slanted to the other side. I ran across the shallow gulley, trying to mark it down. A single flared under my feet and I stopped to shoot. He came down, limp as a wet dish rag. That fourth bird was a Jonah but I didn't know it then. I had lost the covey but I didn't care. Lady was hitting her stride and I was sure she would sniff out the birds for a quick limit.

An hour and a half later, I knew just how wrong you can be, trying to out-guess quail. I knew they hadn't crossed the river because they wouldn't fly that far against the wind. Lady and I gave every inch of the area a thorough combing and never lifted a feather. Before we gave it up, I was about half convinced that some magic was protecting the birds. I found a convenient log and ate a delayed lunch.

That fourth quail was the turning point. With three, I was almost tempted to quit hunting and head for home but with only two left to go, the old limit compulsion started working and I knew I would hunt the rest of the day if I had to. We left Leland's place and hunted another farm for two hours without any luck. Finally, we gave it up and headed north toward Lincoln.

It wasn't much of a country road but it looked inviting so I swung off the main highway and followed it for half a mile or so. I topped a little rise and there was a big covey picking gravel. The quail scuttled into the ditch but they didn't flush. This was a chance to get two more birds but it was going to require a quick campaign.

Trespassing isn't one of my sins so I had to find the landowner. Then I had to figure some way of getting the birds out of the ditch and over the fence line. Time was running out, too. The shooting wasn't going to be easy. If the birds flushed out of the ditch and over the high bank, they would blend with the trees in the background and be tough to see in the lengthening shadows. If they flushed over the road, I had a chance but I'm not keen on shooting across the highway under any conditions. If the birds went straight up the road, there wasn't a prayer since I couldn't stand on the road and I wouldn't be able to see them from the bank.

There was a nice looking farmhouse down the road and I gambled that it might belong to the owner of the property. I made that quarter of a mile in jig time, explained the situation, and got a quick O.K. to hunt. Racing back, I parked north of the birds, scrambled up the bank, and sent Lady down the ditch. We didn't see a bird but the Brittany told me they were still there. Lady was on the job. She nosed down the ditch, pointed, and bounded in when I said, "Flush". Bobwhites boiled

out in 40 different directions. I swung and missed on an incomer, tried again as he went by me and never touched a feather. A tailender came out, flared when he saw me and went parallel to the road but high on my side. In my haste I failed to cheek the autoloader and he sailed on unscathed.

With no time to try a follow up, I had to gamble. When the big covey went up, I saw one bird peel off and pitch into some multiflora rose on the other side of the road.

"Come on, Lady," I shouted. "If we can't get two, maybe we can get one."

Defying the wicked thorns, the little dog plunged in. The quail buzzed out like an oversized bumblebee but I couldn't pick him up as he dodged away.

Disgusted, I started back to the car, convinced that it wasn't going to be a limit day for me after all. Two "sleepers" exploded under my feet. One went west, the other east. Swinging on the west-bound target, I saw a puff of feathers against the sky. Whirling, I tracked the second bird and risked a long shot.

He cartwheeled down, dead before he hit the ground. I trotted over and picked him up as Lady came in with the first of my double. The sun was only a thin, red crescent in the west. I had limited out with about two minutes to spare. For a finish like that, you need a little magic. THE END

ROOTS ALONG THE LOUP

(continued from page 23)

land and it would last for four terrible years.

Laboriously carrying water in pails from the spring and well, mother fought to save her moisture-famished flowers, shrubs, and trees. But it was no use. From sunrise to sunset, winds howled over the bone-dry prairies, converting the flower beds into ghastly

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If you have a story to tell, jot it down and send it to Editor, OUTDOOR NEBRASKAland, State Capitol, Lincoln 68509. Send photographs, too, if any are available.

blowouts. Russian thistles, filled with millions of pestiferous seeds, rolled across Mother's drought-scarred lawn, a hideous substitute for the died-out bluegrass.

As the drought continued, Mother watched the land take on the sickening hue of utter devastation. For a time she despaired of ever seeing anything green again. Even stout-hearted men like her husband grew despondent as they saw the land revert to a desert

wasteland. Livestock perished on the open range, and chickens dropped dead in their tracks from starvation. Still the relentless dry spell continued. Adding to nature's misery was the financial panic which gripped the whole country. Money became so scarce that trade coupons were issued in lieu of cash.

After four years, when it seemed the Haskell's couldn't hold out any longer, a thin, purple line began creeping upward from the horizon. Soon the sky clouded over. A few drops of rain fell, hardly enough to notice, but within a week the rains came. The parched, cracked soil soaked up the steady life-restoring moisture until it could take no more. The overflow, running down the hillsides, formed ponds in the buffalo wallows and other low places. Overjoyed, the settlers sharpened rusty ploughs and prepared to live again.

A few of the locust trees that Grandfather Haskell had set out survived. One lilac bush that Mother planted beside the kitchen door managed to struggle through the drought. The Virginia creeper, clinging to a spark of life, put out a few leaves. Otherwise, Mother had to restart her plantings with less than she had had in the beginning.

Lack of money limited her replacements but she made the most of what she had. With Father's help, she built a hotbed for seedlings of all kinds for herself and her friends and neighbors. Strangers passing through on the way to new homes farther west stopped often to "beg" a few plants.

Rating special attention were the Oriental poppies that were given her by her second cousin, William Jennings Bryan. His trip to the Orient had given him the chance to get these beauties for Mother. Bryan rarely visited the ranch, though, because Father, with his Republican leanings, did not see eye-to-eye with the noted Democrat.

Her worry about lack of rainfall was lessened by the installation of a hydraulic ram which pumped water from the spring. A windmill on the hill above her flower gardens was added insurance.

After the turn of the century, Mother and Father recovered their financial losses and were able to do some traveling. Wherever they went, Mother's main interest was the parks and gardens. She kept collecting plants and seeds until she had so many new varieties it was necessary to expand her garden to an additional half-acre on the west.

Father protested. He thought the undertaking would be too much for her. In her quiet determined way, Mother, now 58, went ahead with her plans and enlisted the aid of her seven children. She kept an eagle eye on us when we worked in the garden for she was particular about her flowers.

Mother had visited a number of formal gardens when she and Father were

on their travels so she designed this new plot along the same lines. The new garden was divided into four sections separated by bluegrass walks. In the center was a circular rose bed glowing with American Beauties, Kaiserine Auguste Viktoria, Talisman, General Jacks, Paul Neyrons, and Floribundas. These great roses were the most striking feature of the garden but other flowers like lilacs, mock oranges, Japanese cherries, flowering almond, and tamarisks added their fragrant contributions. Before she was through, Mother had about every flower that grows in her new garden.

In time the ranch changed hands and now no longer belongs to our family. The gardens have gone but, while they were there, they were a living tribute to a determined little lady who came West and brought beauty with her. She filled a void in Nebraska and she filled it well, bringing inspiration and enjoyment to others and contentment to herself.

THE END

TIGER MAN

(continued from page 21)

to see their favorites in action. Manager Al Haft signed John to go to the island with \$75,000 guaranteed plus a privilege of 25 per cent. The wrestler celebrated the announcement of the May-to-November tour by beating 220-pound Joe Evko in Columbus, Ohio. Evko was left to ponder what hit him and to nurse three broken ribs.

Australia welcomed the Nebraskan, and his feats rapidly endeared him to sports fans there. One of his first targets was Aussie favorite, Jim Browning. The taller and heavier Browning bit the canvas, and the Aussies had a new hero. In Australia John broke into another part of the sports page.

A greyhound, named Just Andrew was going strong in Australian racing circles. John tried, at first unsuccessfully, to buy the animal from owner, J. McDonald. A couple of thousand dollars was top dog money at that time

but the Nebraskan's bid of \$8,500 turned the trick. When John sailed for America, Just Andrew was with him. The Sydney, Australia, sports sheet, *Referee*, bade the favored dog a fond farewell: "Mr. Pesek has been on the lookout for a good greyhound since coming to Australia, and, after seeing all the best dogs in the country running during last season, has selected Just Andrew. He is to be congratulated on his judgment, and he carries the best wishes of Australian sportsmen for the success of his dog."

Those best wishes were realized in short order. The greyhound became an instant success, streaking to win the Waterloo Cup, the classic prize of dog racing. Just Andrew chalked up \$70,000 in purse money. Offers for the dog came regularly and they came high, reaching \$20,000. The Pesek kennel grew with the addition of other top Australian greyhounds such as Gangster and Pacific Dream. John built up a bloodline which runs in 70 per cent of all greyhounds raced in the country today.

Bloodlines, always important to John, led to other enterprises. The wrestler-dog fancier built a game farm and dog racetrack at his Ravenna home. A pond liberally stocked with game fish was added. Prize pigs and other livestock followed. The animals became John's training partners. He worked out constantly to keep in shape. A hapless bull would find himself flung to the ground, or a mammoth hog would be suddenly locked in a powerful scissors hold. John often hitched himself to farm implements to toughen his muscles. The grappler maintains that of all exercises, riding a bicycle did him the most good.

Though his wrestling successes had made him independent, John was still quick to accept any challenge. Often, he hurled a few gauntlets himself. John put up \$5,000, declaring he could defeat three title claimants, Henry DeGlane, Londos and Strangler Lewis, one fall each on the same night. In 1957, the 64-year-old wrestler told Lincoln Journal sportswriter Jim Raglin, "I'll put up \$1,000 any day to meet the so-called 'world champs' of today."

John took a dim view of the manner in which the champion was to be named officially by the National Wrestling Association. In 1936, he posted a \$1,000 bond as required by the association, then offered to take on all comers. No one accepted his challenge. The association declined to give him the crown since no title match was held. Finally, in September, 1937, John was awarded the title. The *Ravenna News*, obviously proud of the famous local boy who kept his home ties, plastered John's picture on the front page. The story began, "After 20 years of trying, John Pesek has realized the ambition of a lifetime."

Far from finished with the arena, John continued to issue challenges left and right. When Joe Louis wore his boxing crown, John offered \$50,000 to



"Daddy, I'm cleaning your fish for you."

him if the heavyweight could last more than five minutes in a mixed match. The contest never materialized. Fans often clamored for the novelty of a boxer and a wrestler in the same ring. Fight managers took a less enthusiastic view, for a man wearing boxing gloves, when thrown to the canvas, makes easy pickings.

The Ravenna terror did get a chance to meet a boxer-wrestler double threat with George Godfrey. John slapped Godfrey across the stomach. The resounding swat put Godfrey out of commission and ended the tilt.

No matter how big the newsprint in which such feats were recounted, John always returned to his home. His wife, Myrl, whom he married in 1921, and seven children strengthened the champ's Ravenna ties even more as years passed. John is even prouder of his family than of his wrestling ability.

Only his son, Jack, followed the trail his father blazed. The former University of Nebraska football star swapped his shoulder pads for wrestler's garb. In 1957, he retraced John's steps to Australia for a ring tour.

Just Andrew is gone now, killed in a dogfight. Gone, too, are the exotic game birds, and the race track. But John is still there, working the farm.

"I want to set one more record," Tiger Man says, "a top Black Angus herd". He pointed to the bull with the same pride that he exhibits toward his family and his fabulous wrestling career.

THE END

SAME OLD WATER

(continued from page 47)

ground, Nebraskans are quick to make use of water, in irrigation, industrial and domestic uses, and for recreation. In this, they parallel the nation. It is estimated that there were 31 million swimmers in 1920, 45 million in 1945, 61 million in 1959, and 100 million in 1965. Only 15,000 pleasure boats were sold in 1920, but 365,000 hit the water in 1950, 550,000 in 1959, and about one million in 1965. The three million fishermen of 1920 grew to 8.5 million in 1945, 21 million by 1959, and still the sport is increasing in popularity each year, with some 40 million active in 1965. Agencies like the Nebraska Game Commission are helping this constant growth.

Where does all this water come from? Thanks to the hydrologic cycle, it's always there, in one form or another, to be used again and again.

To paraphrase Shakespeare, the hydrogen that men burn lives after them, but water is often interred with their bones. When anything burns, the hydrogen present is converted to water, but this hydrogen came from water in the first place, and so another cycle is completed. Since a cycle is simply a circle, it doesn't matter much where it starts.

The hydrologic cycle starting with the sea begins with invisible masses of vapor continually moving upward through the atmosphere. Often, these

vapors form clouds, the cradles of our rains, the great eroders of the earth's land surfaces.

Man looks to the rain to satisfy his needs for fresh water and an enormous total is available. World-wide, a yearly average of 26.3 inches of water drops from clouds or condenses as dew on the 36 billion acres of continents and islands. This annual rainfall totals 82 billion acre-feet or a staggering 26 quadrillion gallons of water, enough to satisfy the thirst of 1,780 people per acre. Since one inch of rain weighs 113 tons per acre, this represents a weight of 106,988,400,000,000 tons of water per year. If all this downfall could be collected and kept pure enough to drink, it would be enough for a human population of 146 trillion or enough people to equal 97,333 Nebraskas, based on the 1960 census figures.

The state's annual average share of this rainfall is about 22 inches, ranging from 33 inches in the southeast corner to about 14 inches in a small area near the western border. Record rainfalls are the ones that are remembered. One of the state's biggest downpours occurred at York during the night of July 8-9, 1950. The rain began shortly before 8 p. m. By midnight 11.59 inches had fallen, and by 5 a. m., another 1.56 inches had dropped for a storm total of 13.15 inches in nine hours. Such a deluge occurs at a specific site in Central Nebraska about once every 500 years. Another storm in June, 1963, dumped over 14 inches of rain near Garrison in a longer time period.

Most of NEBRASKAland's summer precipitation occurs during showers and thunderstorms, and these are sometimes accompanied by hail. Hailstones are born of the great commotion resulting from warm and cold layers of air coming together and forcing the water droplets to oscillate violently up and down, freezing as they pass through the cold layer and gathering more moisture from the warm to be frozen into ice on their next trip through the cold. The more they pass through these layers, the bigger they grow, until finally they are too heavy for the violent circulation and down they come.

The ethereal iceman dropped a few hailstones on Potter, Nebraska, on July 6, 1928, to give the town the world's biggest hailstone record. The largest measured 17 inches in circumference, and weighed 1½ pounds. Others measured 14 and 15 inches. Four houses and a garage had holes punched in their roofs, but no injuries resulted.

Another of the cycle's children is snow, which is simply a crystalline form of water that has evolved directly from the vapor. The snowiest weather station in the United States is the Paradise Ranger Station on Mount Rainier in Washington, where 1,000.3 inches or 83½ feet were recorded in the winter of 1955-56. A

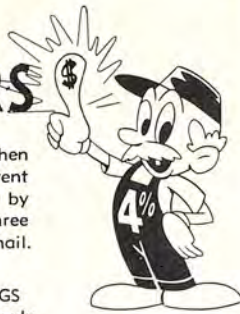


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snowfall of 76 inches in 24 hours on April 14-15, 1921, was reported at Silver Lake, Colorado, for the dubious distinction of being the nation's greatest 24-hour snowfall.

NEBRASKAland's milder winter climate forbids such harsh snow storms. The state's heaviest 24-hour snowfall came down in Lincoln on February 11, 1965, when 19 inches of the fluffy frozen lace tumbled down.

Water has played a vital role in the history of the world and will influence the future. The dilemma of space travel and water supplies are now under study. Two astronauts on a 100-day voyage would need 50 gallons of water, posing a space and weight problem in their rocket. Researchers are experimenting with other possibilities, including conversion of waste into water.

They have learned, like the little hero in the fairy tale, to extract water from solid rock. Right now, the modern ocean liner can put to sea with less than a day's supply of fresh water per person on board, and yet keep full tanks of water, no matter how long the voyage. Man has simply learned to adapt the hydrologic cycle to his own use by means of heat released from the burning of fuel oil.

But no matter which way it comes or how it's stored, it's still the same old water. Its history is the NEBRASKAland heritage of today, and the beginnings of tomorrow. **THE END**

GHOST TOWN

(continued from page 41)

pipes, but it cleared quickly. They were driven wells, so I figured the water was safe to drink. It tasted sweet and cold, just as it did from the infant White River that was only a few yards away.

Refreshed by the cool drink, we continued our exploring among the houses that once knew the warmth of a family and the laughter of children. But now, they stood lonely and bare.

An old, one-room log cabin, its roof gone except for skeleton stringers lying black against the blue sky, stood back in a field. A broken down, decaying wagon stood guard before it. We climbed all over both, disregarding the warning cracks of rotting timbers. Before we finished our explorations, the sun was sliding closer to the western hills and the evening chill was entering the valley. "I'll bet this place is a swinger after dark," I told Cy as we headed back to our headquarters. "I wouldn't put it past old Lou to sneak out here and try to scare us."

"Let him try," Cy snorted. "We'll drop a building on him."

Cy lit the gasoline lantern and I blew up the air mattresses while he unwrapped our supper package. After eating, I started to unroll the sleeping bags. A book fell out of Cy's. I saw that it was an English textbook and

wondered why he brought it. He hastily grabbed the book, but it was too late. The damage was done.

"What nastiness is this?" I wanted to know.

"My homework," Cy stated. "My teacher will clobber me if I don't have my English on Monday."

The room was turning cold, and we'd failed to gather any wood for the old heater. It was black as tar outside and I didn't relish hunting fuel with only my flashlight, but I didn't like to be cold either.

The night was dead quiet. Weeds snapped underfoot like firecrackers. The lantern cradled us in a protective ball of light, but even this was stabbed through by shadows from the ominous dark.

CRACK!

Cy had broken a stick and the sound tingled my tightening nerves. We pulled dead branches from the trees and piled the pieces close to the doorway. I ventured toward a twisted old stump and the air was ripped with a rapid, whistling *too-too-too-too-too!* My flashlight jumped toward the sound and locked on a tiny owl in a big knothole. The warty wood around him served as almost perfect camouflage except for the fierce glare of his yellow eyes. I turned aside to be met by a horrendous, upside down monster's head only inches from my face. I stumbled backward before I realized it was only a peculiarly shaped stub of the rotting tree, which

looked weird enough even without the goosepimpling effect of the flashlight's beam.

When the wood was finally stacked beside the stove, Cy suggested one more walk before we turned in. I took him to the tree where the owl had been, but he was gone. The monster's head startled Cy just as it had me. "I feel like those 'hokes' in the scare movies," he said. "Are you scared?"

"No, but it's mighty creepy. Suppose something was out here. What would we do?" I asked.

"Anything so different as to scare us, would likely be just as scared of us," Cy stated. That's one reason I like him. He thinks things out.

Cy swung the lantern around his head and the world went pinwheel crazy with spinning shadows, like the stabbing, whirling spokes of a giant spider's web, with us in the center.

As I've said, old buildings seem to absorb a little life, and as we walked, I felt I was on a treadmill, walking, but strangely standing still, while the buildings themselves seemed to slide forward out of the black, waver by, and vanish into limbo.

One of them flowed right toward us so we clumped into the black maw of the doorway, to become trapped in the stomach-like room within. The old house was ankle deep in rags, tin cans, bottles, bedsprings, cardboard boxes, and the smell of mice. We stumbled through the foul smelling mess to the

room beyond through the back door and into the outside air, right in front of the building where we would sleep.

We closed the door against the night and the things it held, stuffed the stove with wood, and as the fire muttered in the flue, made ready for bed. Cy picked up his book and I let him study, while I thought of the day's adventures. Finally his hand reached out, ghost white in the lantern glare, and turned off the valve. The shadows, gathered in the far corners of the room, gained substance and opacity. Like black panthers they leaped toward the dying mantles and the room was dark.

Dark except for a hellish spot of pulsing red hanging two feet above the floor, within a cat's spring of our sleeping bags!

I watched the spot fade slowly as the fire died and the red-hot belly of the stove cooled. Cy was already asleep when I became aware of all the tiny sounds I hadn't heard before. Some were easy to identify, others were strange.

A soft snuffling in a far corner. That would be a racing mouse. The occasional creak was floorboard or a settling rafter. Out in the night I could hear the ululation of a prairie wolf.

My senses locked on a sound I couldn't identify. A sound of heavy oil falling drop by drop somewhere in the room. A soft, muted dropping as if it were landing on a cushiony surface. Sometimes three or four in measured

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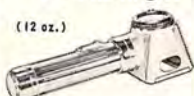
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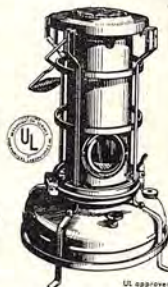
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cadence, then an agonizing interval before another muffled plop. I thought instantly of three huge spots I'd been seeing on the ceiling during the afternoon. Spots that appeared to have been made by oil, but there were no oil stains on the rubbish in the attic when we explored it.

The sound built up within my head to a pounding thud, and in spite of my disbelief in ghosts, my heart speeded up. My mind sifted through all the sounds I'd ever heard, to be interrupted by a sudden settling noise and a series of the oily soft sounds. I sat bolt upright. My eyes caught the ash pit of the old stove, until now masked from sight by the foot of my sleeping bag. Bright sparks showed in the dead ashes, and then that dull, soft plop was repeated as a small, live coal dropped through the grate to land in the ashes and fade to nothing.

A flood of relief came over me, and feeling a little foolish, I eased back on my mattress. My senses dulled, and I went to sleep.

The clatter of the stove door awakened me. Gray morning light filled the room and the flame of the newly kindled fire patterned Cy's face as he stoked the stove. We dressed quickly and stepped out into the chilly morning.

The town no longer seemed as eerie as it had the day before. The buildings still breathed their peculiar life, but it was more friendly as if in thanks for our having been there through a long, dark, and lonely night.

A rabbit bounced before us on his way to some green grass by a disintegrating foundation. I climbed the old stump and told my monster friend goodbye.

When Lou came driving up the road promptly at seven, he seemed plenty disappointed that we were feeling so chipper. He looked around apprehensively and asked, "How does it feel, spending a night with the ghosts?"

"Why don't you try it and see?" Cy asked. "That is, if you've got the guts."

We don't think he has. THE END

OUTDOOR

ELSEWHERE

Rugged Reynards. Federal mammal control agents and biologists are still puzzled by the case of the two bald red foxes. Both, almost completely hairless but otherwise in good physical condition, were trapped in 20-below zero weather last December. Several hairless skunks have also been killed in the same area.—*Minnesota*

Film Litter Kills. Recent laboratory tests on roadside menagerie animals that died suddenly have revealed negatives of Polaroid camera film in their stomachs. Users of this type of camera should make certain that film negatives are disposed of properly and not thrown where animals can eat them.—*Texas*

More Fatalities. Traffic accidents in 1965 will kill well over 50,000 persons. An equivalent death toll at sea would require the sinking of 15 to 20 giant ocean liners with all hands aboard. In the air it would require around 500 jet airplane crashes—about 40 every month or 10 every week.—*Connecticut*

Purist. Lugging sleeping bag, waders, and tackle, a 17-year-old hitchhiked 165 miles to go trout fishing for two days, because his high school teachers told him they were tops. He caught 22 fish, topped by a 17-inch rainbow, and released all of them.—*Michigan*

Dangerous Sport. According to a five-year study conducted by the Travelers Insurance Company, hunting may be safer than church. The company paid more claims on games and activities at

church socials than it paid for hunting accidents. In fact, hunting ranked 16th on the list of claims, far below the gentle sports of fishing, baseball, and golf.—*Colorado*

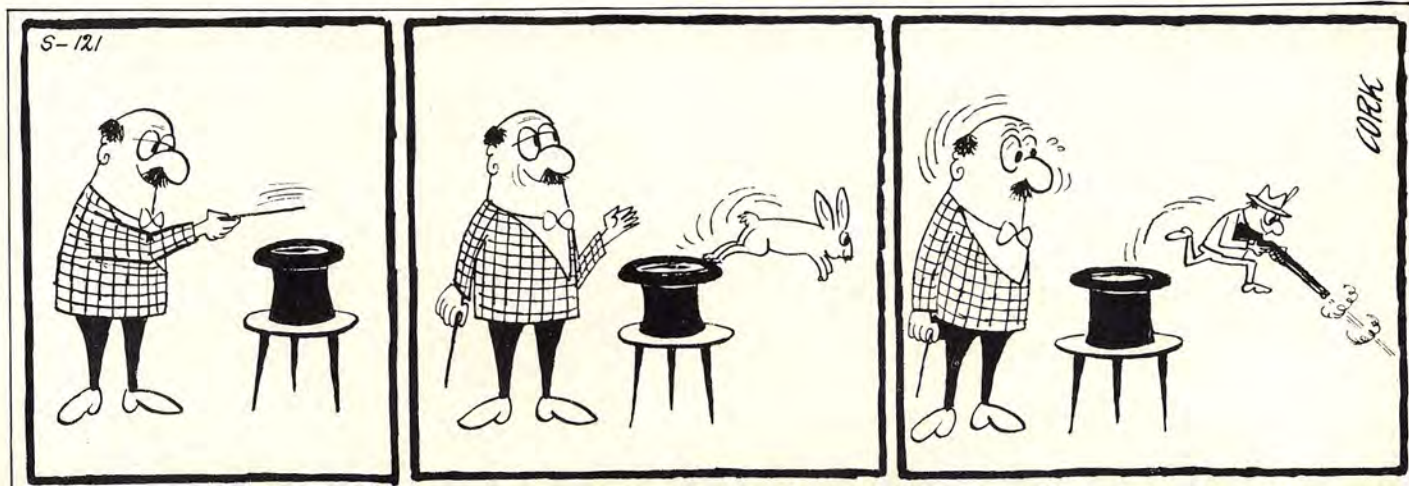
Wide Open. Pennsylvania hunters have little cause to complain when it comes to finding places to hunt. During the 1964 season, a co-operative Safety Zone Program kept 2,139,430 acres open to public hunting.—*Pennsylvania*

Hep Cats. A couple has given up the idea of using surplus smelt to fertilize the rose bushes—Indian style. They lost a third of their roses to cats that came from miles around to dig up the feast.—*New York*

Delicious Deer. Recent investigation of venison cooking techniques shows that overcooking is the reason for dryness. Experiments reveal that as the internal temperature of the meat increases, tenderness, and juiciness fall rapidly.—*Michigan*

Fall Guy. Pity this poor hunter. He sighted a distant deer from his perch in a tree. In his excitement he fell out of the tree and landed on top of another buck he hadn't seen feeding directly beneath him. And, he didn't get either one of them.—*Massachusetts*

Sleeper. A woman who was about to release a small sheepshead fish when she noticed a fishing contest tag on it. She shuddered when she realized that she had almost tossed back a tiny fish worth \$1,000.—*Florida*



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Dick H. Schaffer

OUTDOOR NEBRASKAland of the Air

SUNDAY

KGFV, Kearney (1340 kc)	7:05 a.m.
KTTT, Columbus (1510 kc)	7:30 a.m.
KMMJ, Grand Island (750 kc)	7:40 a.m.
KRGI, Grand Island (1430 kc)	7:40 a.m.
WOW, Omaha (590 kc)	7:40 a.m.
KVSH, Valentine (940 kc)	8:00 a.m.
KXXX, Colby, Kan. (790 kc)	8:00 a.m.
WJAG, Norfolk (780 kc)	8:15 a.m.
KBRIL, McCook (1300 kc)	9:45 a.m.
KODY, North Platte (1240 kc)	10:45 a.m.
KLMS, Lincoln (1480 kc)	11:00 a.m.
KIMB, Kimball (1260 kc)	11:15 a.m.
KMA, Shenandoah, Iowa (960 kc)	12:15 p.m.
KOGA, Ogallala (930 kc)	12:30 p.m.
KFOR, Lincoln (1240 kc)	12:45 p.m.
KCNL, Broken Bow (1280 kc)	1:15 p.m.
KUVR, Holdrege (1380 kc)	2:45 p.m.
KHUB, Fremont (1340 kc)	4:40 p.m.
KNCY, Nebraska City (1600 kc)	5:00 p.m.
KRVN, Lexington (1010 kc)	5:40 p.m.
KTNC, Falls City (1230 kc)	5:45 p.m.

KFAB (Mon.-Fri.) Nightly

MONDAY

KGMT, Fairbury (1310 kc)	1:00 p.m.
KSID, Sidney (1340 kc)	6:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

KJSK, Columbus (900 kc)	1:30 p.m.
KCOW, Alliance (1400 kc)	4:30 p.m.

SATURDAY

KCSR, Chadron (610 kc)	6:00 a.m.
KOLT, Scottsbluff (1320 kc)	11:45 a.m.
KAWL, York, (1370 kc)	12:45 p.m.
KHAS, Hastings (1230 kc)	1:00 p.m.
KRF5, Superior (1600 kc)	1:00 p.m.
KWRV, McCook (1360 kc)	1:45 p.m.
KBRX, O'Neill (1350 kc)	4:30 p.m.
KMNS, Sioux City, Iowa (620 kc)	6:10 p.m.
KCOW, Alliance (1400 kc)	9:30 p.m.

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Richard J. Spady, land management
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Lloyd P. Vance, game

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COMING IN THE FEBRUARY ISSUE

New treats are in store for NEBRASKAland readers. Starting next month, great photographs in sparkling color will illustrate some of the feature articles, but that isn't all. You'll fly a Strategic Air Command mission from Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha to the frigid Arctic, enjoy an exciting two-deer hunt in the picturesque Pine Ridge country of western Nebraska, and share the thrills of catching scrappy rainbow trout in little known Fairfield Creek. There is more to come. Enjoy a Winter Wonderland from the comfort of your armchair as NEBRASKAland's cameras capture all the beauty and splendor of snow-covered prairies and ice-locked rivers.

These new and exciting changes in your favorite magazine are part of a continuing policy by the Nebraska Game, Forestation, and Parks Commission to bring you the very best of this big and always-enchanted state.

You won't want to miss a single issue of NEBRASKAland for there are plenty of reading and viewing greats in store for the next 12 months. The February issue is just a preview.

NOTES ON NEBRASKA FAUNA...

ENGLISH SPARROW

*More pest than pleasure, this import
from Europe is here by request. Now,
most of us regret the invitation*

by Norman Dey
District Game Supervisor



These stay-at-homers aren't particular about their abodes. Drainage pipes and eaves are favorites, much to dismay of homeowners. Nests are usually a mess

FROM HERO TO VILLAIN is the history of the English sparrow in America. In 1850, eight pairs were imported from Europe to Brooklyn, New York. They were kept in captivity until the spring of 1851, and then released to deal with the caterpillars which were defoliating the shade trees of the East. Little did the introducers know the English sparrow would be a nuisance within a short time.

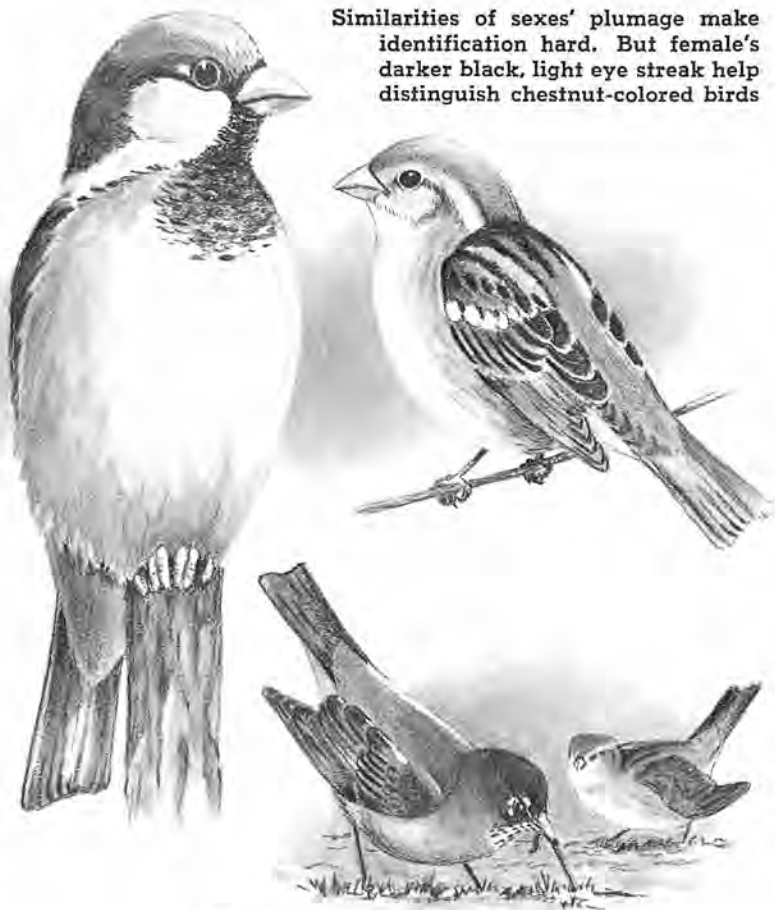
Often called a "house sparrow" or simply "sparrow," *Passer domesticus* is one of the more familiar birds in Nebraska. A member of the weaver finch family, this small import, no more than seven inches in length, is

found around cities, towns, and farms. A male is identified by a black chin and throat, with the side of the neck and back of the head, a chestnut color. The female has a light streak above and behind the eye and her back is browner; otherwise, she resembles the male. Undersides of both sexes are whitish.

Females lay from four to seven eggs which are white with fine olive-brown markings. Egg coloration will vary from plain white to a uniform olive color. A pair usually raises three broods a year.

Nesting begins in March or early April. Sparrows are not particular where they build their nests, although

Similarities of sexes' plumage make identification hard. But female's darker black, light eye streak help distinguish chestnut-colored birds



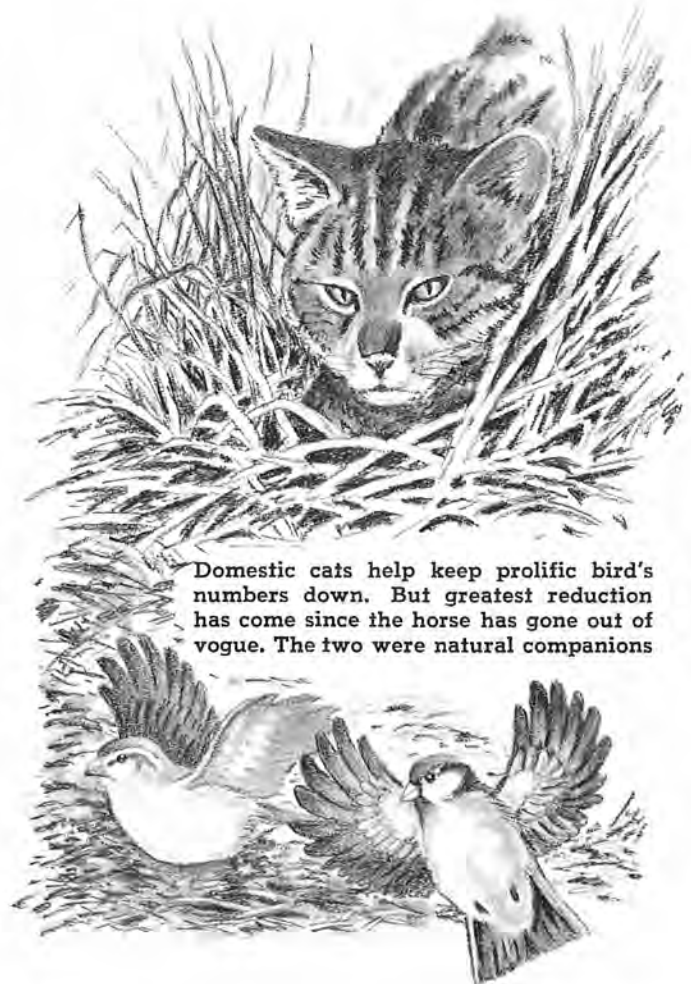
Sparrow proves the early bird does not get worm as he tails other birds and pirates their unearthed morsel



Sparrow's diet is varied. Although he eats many useful insects, harmful ones like caterpillar and weevil also his fare

preferred sites are eaves, in drainage pipes, bird houses, and among vines on buildings. Less frequently, nests are built in trees. Being nonmigratory, the sparrow often beats a desired species to a bird house. Preferred nesting materials are grasses and straw with an inner layer of feathers. Although the nest is no work of art, the male and the female collect large quantities of material. The entrance to a tree nest is located on the side. A roughly constructed roof protects the dwelling.

Diets consist of grain, berries, fruit, garden vegetables, and comparatively few insects, of which a large proportion are of beneficial species. At times, large



Domestic cats help keep prolific bird's numbers down. But greatest reduction has come since the horse has gone out of vogue. The two were natural companions

numbers of caterpillars infesting shade trees and garden crops are consumed. During outbreaks of alfalfa weevils, the birds will feed their young on weevil larvae and cut worms, which are very injurious to alfalfa.

The spread across the country is attributed to several factors with the sparrow's large reproductive potential one of the most important. A single pair with moderate nesting success produces hundreds of offspring within a very few years. Authorities attribute the fast spread of the birds to the early use of horses. Sparrows found an abundance of food and nest locations in the stables. Since the decrease in horses, sparrow populations have shown a marked decline.

As a city dweller, the import has no natural predators. Domestic cats and man are the only controlling factors, other than habitat. It is nearly impossible to eliminate them from areas where they damage gardens and dwellings. Their habit of building nests in drainage pipes and guttering causes trouble.

These feathered pests frequently attack robins, song sparrows, wrens, chickadees, and thrushes to obtain food and nest sites. They are fond of angleworms for themselves and their young. Since the birds are unable to dig for worms, they have become efficient thieves. It is not uncommon to see sparrows accompanying a robin that is prospecting for worms. If the robin finds one, the pilferers rush in and steal the choice morsel.

When considering the introduction of a foreign species into an area, the example of the English sparrow should be remembered. Had the early settlers looked at the future of this bird in America, we would not have our present problems with this pesky Englishman and his brash habits.

THE END

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